Sports, Youth and Character: A Critical Survey

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It has been recognized for centuries that sport can contribute to education values that make for the development of character and right social relations . . . . [Within this contribution] there are many intertwined and interwoven threads of influences, subtle and not always easy to analyze. But sportsmen who year by year have contact with the playing of amateur games do not need to be convinced by argument of the validity of . . . [sport's contribution].

Kennedy, 1931[1]

Sport studies scholars . . . [present sports as a] major source of . . . [social] problems . . . . [But most] athletes, coaches, parents, youth sports organizers, and spectators know from experience that sports participation has offered them numerous moments of pleasure, healthy exercise, friendships . . . and lessons about achievement, cooperation and competition that spill over into nonsport contexts. The critical sports studies perspective rarely rings 'true' as a complete story in the case of sports participants.

Gatz, Messner, and Ball-Rokeach, 2000[2]

I. INTRODUCTION

Sport builds character. *Mens sana in corpore sano*. Physical, mental, and moral health go together. These are foundational beliefs in modern society. For example, they undergird the European Union's nomination of 2004 as the "Year of Education through Sport," an intensification of the Union's decades-long "sports for all" policy.[3] Vivian Reding, European Commissioner for Education and Culture, observes:

> *One in every three Europeans regularly practices a sport. Yet more needs to be done to make sports an integral part of people's education and life. . . . Next to the active support of appropriate projects, and school sport in particular, we intend [in 2004] to sensitize the awareness of European citizens for the values which sport effortlessly and naturally conveys and that are indispensable for a happy and fulfilling life in our community.*[4]

Likewise, here in the United States these foundational beliefs are officially endorsed by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, which views itself as a "catalyst to promote, encourage and motivate Americans of all ages to become physically active and participate in sports." The Council declares:

> *We place a special emphasis on programs to help our nation's youth lay the foundation for active and fit lives. The . . . [Council] believes that physical activity and fitness offer important health benefits. And, just as important, we recognize the fact that sports and participating in sport activities help individuals develop character, discipline, confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of well-being.*[5]

While these foundational propositions seem transparent to the "sports participant" and to all "sportsmen who year by year have contact with the playing of amateur sports," the operation of the "intertwined" and "subtle" influences that make these propositions true is another matter. That the influences are not "easy to analyze" points to a need for the tools of the social scientist. What does the use of these tools reveal about the mechanisms that make sports participation a valuable adjunct to character development? Indeed, what does the use of these tools prompt social scientists to say about the foundational propositions themselves?

In an extensive survey in 1975 of previous research, Christopher L. Stevenson concluded that "there is no valid evidence that participation in sport causes any verifiable socialization effects."[6] Even earlier, two researchers, Bruce Ogilvie and Thomas Tutko, had announced in the popular forum, *Psychology Today*, that they "found no empirical support for the tradition that sport builds character."[7] Contemporary scholars echo these contentions. Andrew Miracle and Roger Rees in their recent study of high school sports conclude that "there is no evidence to support the claim that sport builds character in high school or anywhere else." If anything, sports participation among younger kids, they suggest, may yield negative effects – making the participants more rather than less prone to unsportsmanlike conduct.[8] When two leading contemporary scholars, David Shields and Brenda Bredemeier, note that sport's character-building propensity is "no longer so widely shared" as an article of faith, they understate the broad skepticism among researchers.[9]

Not only does social science scholarship fail to present a unified picture of the subtle and intertwined influences that promote character development through sport, much of it appears actually to undermine the foundational beliefs all "sportsmen" know without need of argument. Why is social science scholarship so at odds with what seemingly needs no proof?

There are two reasons. First, studies of sport and character seldom overcome a threshold requirement of scientific methodology itself. Second, many investigators labor under several

self-inflicted wounds, conceptual and theoretical. I say a brief word about each.

A. METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

In his 1975 survey, Christopher Stevenson did not fail to find studies that established positive correlations between sports participation and valued outcomes. To take two examples, many studies he examined showed participants to be more self-disciplined, self-confident, and emotionally stable than non-participants, while other studies showed participation to be associated with better academic performance.[10] Since 1975, studies have continued to demonstrate positive correlations between students' activity in sports or physical education and their less delinquent behavior, higher educational aspirations, and better grades.[11] These findings, however, do not support conclusions about *causation*. This is because these studies are not able to factor out "selection" effects.

The "selection" problem is described by Stevenson with respect to studies that imply athletes are less likely to be delinquents. "It could be the case," he observes, "that athletics simply do not attract boys who have been or are likely to become delinquent." Thus, the correlation between sports participation and lack of delinquency may point not to the salubrious effect of athletics but to a prior character or personality trait in delinquency-prone youth – say, a dislike for conformity – that inclines them both to avoid organized sports and to run afoul of laws and rules.[12] If this aversive self-selection actually operates in sports participation, then we could not safely conclude from a simple inverse correlation between sports play and law-breaking that more sports is an antidote to delinquency.

Many scholars since Stevenson have emphasized the "selection" problem as a reason to be skeptical about claims connecting sports to positive effects on character.[13] Indeed, one well-known student of sports attributes *all* the alleged influences of participation to the self-selection phenomenon:

> *[S]ports participation does not build character, discipline, self-esteem, and other achievement-related qualities in young men and women. Rather, it provides an outlet for those already imbued with these positive traits.*[14]

This confident assertion seems as unwarranted as its opposite counterparts. If most studies are unable successfully to disentangle selection and causation, then there is as little basis for denying the positive contribution of sports participation as there is for affirming it. This point is important to note because a substantial body of studies reported in the last two decades seems to show that sports participants are made worse by their experience. For example, a series of studies by David Shields and Brenda Jo Bredemeier paints an apparently disturbing picture. The two scholars conclude that when youth enter sport "they tend to shift their moral perspective in the direction of egocentric reasoning."[15] Athletes show "less adequate moral reasoning than their nonathletic counterparts."[16] As children "move from the more unstructured play of elementary school to the more competitive and structured play of youth leagues," they become more morally calloused and aggressive.[17] Indeed, "[t]here is ample support for the idea that an in-sport socialization process occurs that tends to legitimize illegal or extralegal aggression, particularly in contact sports."[18]

Shields and Bredemeier are sometimes cautious in drawing conclusions from their findings, noting that selection effects may be at work rather than anything intrinsic to sports play itself.[19] However, in other instances their rhetoric takes on a strident, conclusory tone. They portray high school football games, for example, as places where "acts that would normally be considered felonious assaults are routinely carried out by budding young men to the applause of society." They see "the present practice of sport" doing "more to foster militarism than peace,"[20] a characterization that comfortably rubs elbows with some of the more extravagant claims available in the literature: that sport inducts children into "sado-ascetic" structures producing "emotional and physical deprivation,"[21] "offers

youth a pedagogy of racial and sexual exclusion, gender hierarchy, violence, and destructively competitive values,"[22] and teaches them "elitist, win-at-all-costs" ideals.[23]

B. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL INFELICITIES

A considerable segment of scholarship in the last two decades has taken a debunking approach to sports participation, aided in part by convenient straw men. It is not hard for debunkers to make headway against such targets as these: *sports competition is an unalloyed good*;[24] *it leads automatically to good character traits*;[25] *these traits can't be learned in other activities*.[26] At the same time, it is not surprising that many of these debunkers nevertheless see in sports participation a potential for positive character formation. After all, sport is a human institution. Like religion, government, and formal education, surely its manifestations will exhibit the strengths and weaknesses of the people who establish and manage it. Well-organized by competent people who understand and prize sport's true aims, athletic competition can be a training ground for virtue;[27] badly run by ill-trained people who distort or corrupt sport's true aims, athletic competition can be a school for vice.[28]

More important than the straw men are the conceptual and theoretical problems that mar much recent scholarship. I touch on some of these here. They receive extended treatment in Appendix A and Appendix B.

"Character," of course, is a broad, sweeping notion and social scientists necessarily use a surrogate – some limited aspect or dimension of character – in framing their studies. In recent years, two of the prominent surrogates employed have been "aggression" and "moral reasoning." Investigators have looked at whether athletes are more aggressive than their nonparticipating counterparts and whether they reason as well about moral quandaries.[29] Unfortunately, neither of these surrogates is used effectively. Individual studies of "aggression" are frequently marred by muddled definitions;[30] and the body of studies taken as a whole lacks a common denominator.[31] Likewise, the studies of "moral reasoning" in athletic contexts fail to supply findings in which we can have confidence. The main weakness of the "moral reasoning" literature lies in its devotion to theories of moral development that – though widely used – are badly flawed. The theories grow out of the original "stage" conception of moral development propounded by Lawrence Kohlberg.[32] Later followers and critics have modified the conception in different ways.[33] Nevertheless, whether as originally conceived or as subsequently amended, these theories fail to (i) map moral development credibly, (ii) offer an accurate account of moral reasoning, or (ii) avoid substituting commitment for description.[34] On the whole, studies of sports employing these theories – as plentiful as they are – have not shed much real light on participation and character.[35]

II. THE LESSONS OF SPORT

What are sports supposed to teach? The list of values and experiences various writers have imputed to sports as the expected or desired effect of participation is long and miscellaneous. The participant purportedly learns – or can learn – to

- cooperate with teammates;[36]
- display courage;[37]
- play fair;[38]
- be loyal to teammates;[39]
- develop self-discipline and practice self-control;[40]
- respect rules;[41]
- express compassion;[42]
- foster peace;[43]
- exhibit sportsmanship;[44]
- maintain integrity;[45]
- be honest and civil;[46]
- be aggressive;[47]
- become competitive;[48]
- persevere;[49]
- subordinate self to group;[50]
- show leadership;[51]
- engage in hegemonic resistance;[52]
- feel empathy;[53]

- understand ethcs;[54]
- respect the environment;[55]
- experience the team as moral community;[56]
- develop perspective-taking;[57]
- reason at a more mature level morally;[58]
- become caring and considerate;[59]
- exercise critical thinking;[60]
- feel self-esteem.[61]

Some of the items on this list seem intrinsic to sports participation – that is, they are the sorts of values and experiences sport conveys "effortlessly and naturally," in the words of European Commissioner Vivian Reding. Of course, "effortlessly" is a bad choice of words, since an athlete's embracing the basic values in her sport may require considerable effort on her part. Reding means rather that learning certain norms arises as a *natural by-product* of playing a sport, especially a team sport. To be good, an athlete needs to persevere, discipline herself to the rigors of training, and summon the pluck to go on even when her cause seems hopeless. All this is true whether the athlete runs track, competes in tennis, or plays soccer. In the last case, the athlete's circumstance calls for more than perseverance, discipline, and pluck. Soccer is a game of positions and roles – a team cannot flourish unless the player subordinates herself to its demands and carries out her responsibilities.

Also internal to a sport – whether it is track, tennis, or soccer – is the idea of sportsmanship. In a vigorous contest under fair conditions, the losers should be gracious and the winners magnanimous. Players should play within the rules and respect their opponents.[62] After all, what's at stake is not victory *sans* qualification but victory within the limits imposed by the rules. The great NFL coach Vince Lombardi is famous for having insisted "winning isn't everything, it's the only thing," a quote many commentators offer up as example number #1 of the out-of-control competitiveness that mars American sports. But, of course, Lombardi didn't mean what he said. His legacy includes five NFL championships and two Super Bowl victories in his nine seasons with the Green Bay Packers. Had those victories come through bribing opposition players or poisoning their food before title games, Lombardi would not now be remembered as a great coach and his "victories" would have counted for nothing. Quite obviously, Lombardi meant there is no substitute for *victory within the rules established by the game*; there is no substitute for *victory fairly seized from a worthy opponent*. Fair play against evenly matched opponents is the essence of sport. Internal to competition is an ideal that has always picked out the boasting victor, the surly loser, and the cheat as bad sports. The good sport learns passionately to want victory while knowing that defeat may crown his efforts. He learns how to keep both defeat and victory in perspective – to moderate his disappointment in defeat and check his elation of victory.[63]

While sportsmanship, courage, and perseverance may "naturally" emerge in the contexts of practice and play, several other items on the list above have no direct connection to sports. Why should we expect playing volleyball to improve a child's critical thinking skills, or develop her understanding of ethics in general, or enhance her capacity for empathy? Why should playing baseball be burdened with fostering peace or inciting resistance to hegemony?

There is no obvious reason that sport play should be freighted with "learning outcomes" so distant from its core. Organizing participation for youth so that it encourages self-discipline, pluck, teamwork, and a spirit of fair play would seem chore enough. Plenty of newsprint testifies to failings in youth sports – abusive coaches, violent spectators, over-demanding parents – that need attending to. What is wrong, then, with letting sport be sport?[64]

III. BASICS

Roughly forty million boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 18 take part in organized athletic activities, most of which are not school-based.[65] Boys and girls play in sports as varied as swimming, baseball, soccer, wrestling, and

field hockey. The great majority participate in "recreational" leagues in which teams enroll all-comers, compete against local counterparts, and honor the norm "everyone gets to play." These teams are coached by volunteer moms and dads with no prior coaching experience (or even substantial playing experience in the sport they coach). These recreational leagues are most heavily populated by kids in the age 5 to 11 range. By age eleven, many of the better players get siphoned off to selective "travel teams" formed through try-outs and playing a schedule that often requires considerable travel (hence the name "travel teams"). Other casual players drift away from sports to pursue different interests as they enter adolescence. The recreational teams fielding 14-, 15-, and 16-year olds form the narrow top of a pyramid with its much wider base representing the younger entry-level ages.

Alex Poinsett, relying on work by Martha Ewing and Vern Seefeldt, reports that ninety percent "of the nation's 2.5 million volunteer coaches . . . lack formal preparation."[66] For example, a coach of a team sponsored by a local Boys & Girls club may only be required to attend a half-Saturday seminar on proper behavior. What counts most is her willingness to organize once-a-week practice for her young charges and get them to games on the weekend, teaching them some basic skills and rudimentary tactics in the process.

Registration fees for recreational teams typically fall in the $35-$45 range. Equipment and uniform costs vary by sport – for example, basketball, soccer, and baseball require modest outlays while football and ice hockey require somewhat more.

The annual attrition rate in youth sports is estimated at 35 percent. Most youth who leave a team do so because their interests shift – to another sport or to a non-sport activity. A much smaller fraction leaves because of negative experience – dislike of coach, intolerance of pressure, burnout.[67] The negative experiences seem to contribute more to "younger athlete's decisions to stop playing a sport than they do for older athletes."[68]

If there are forty million kids in organized sports, there are at least this many concerned and involved parents. The lessons a child takes from his sports involvement – lessons about sportsmanship, fair play, and competition – are shaped in large measure by parental attitudes and behavior. A good deal of attention by sports organizers and scholars focuses on the effect of coaches on young players' attitudes, and justifiably so, but evidence suggests that a player's family has the greatest influence on his views, and within the family, parents are more influential than siblings.[69]

To see a contemporary model of youth sports in operation, look at the city of Colorado Springs, Colorado, population 360,000. The city's Department of Youth and Recreation oversees six outdoor swimming facilities and two indoor pools; 45 tennis courts; more than a hundred softball and baseball diamonds; 77 soccer fields; and 80 basketball courts. It enrolls 12,000 children in recreational sports such as flag football (ages 7-9), soccer (ages 5-15), baseball and softball (beginning at age 5), and swimming. All of its volunteer coaches receive training through the American Sports Education Program, an on-line training curriculum run by Human Kinetics Publishers. In addition, the Colorado Springs Police Athletic League supports teams in several sports, as does the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Pikes Peak Region, and the YMCAs in the metropolitan area. Finally, several private sports clubs supply an extensive array of opportunities for youth at developmental, intermediate, and competitive levels. Consider the options for a boy or girl who wants to play baseball. The following organizations maintain teams: the city Parks & Recreation agency for kids between ages 5 and 17, the Colorado Springs Police Athletic League for kids between 7 and 15, the Boys & Girls Clubs for kids between 7 and 18, the Colorado Springs Youth Baseball Association for kids between 5 and 14, the Academy Little League for kids between 5 and 12, the Tri-Lakes Little League for kids between 5 and 16, the West El Paso Baseball Club for kids between 5 and 15, the Southern

Colorado Baseball Club for boys between 14 and 18, the Fountain Valley Baseball Association for kids between 5 and 14, the Pikes Peak Competitive Baseball Association for kids between 10 and 14, and American Legion baseball for boys between 15 and 18. The YMCAs of Colorado Springs offer T-ball and coach-pitch ball for kids between 3 and 7. Within these options there is a niche for every ability level and aspiration – from merely recreational to highly competitive, from low-cost to high-outlay.[70]

To all of these options we must add, of course, the opportunities to play on varsity sports teams at Colorado Springs' high schools.

A. TOO MUCH TOO EARLY?

Observers of youth sports express concern that widespread participation in organized athletics crowds out the informal, self-organized play essential to a healthy childhood. Children are subjected to the routines, structures, and limitations of games organized and managed by adults.[71] Moreover, clubs are pushing competition and intense skills-development downward to younger and younger ages. An anecdote recounted in the *New York Times* is iconic:

> *Nancy Lazenby Blaser was a newcomer to the town of Morgan Hill, Calif., just south of San Jose, when she took her 5-year-old daughter, Alexandra, to the local playground. By happenstance, Alexandra became involved in an informal game of softball with a group of other kindergartners.*
>
> *"One of the mothers was watching Alexandra and said: 'Hey, she's pretty good. What team does she play on?'" Lazenby Blaser said. "And I said: 'She doesn't play on any team. She's 5 years old.' And the other mother looked at me with this serious expression and said, 'If she doesn't start to play organized ball now, she won't be able to play in high school.'*
>
> *"And I laughed and said: 'Do you know what I do for a living?'"*
>
> *Lazenby Blaser is the commissioner of athletics for the central-coast section of the California Interscholastic Federation.*
>
> *"The pressure to start that early, and most of it is peer pressure, gets to most people," she said. "You start second-guessing yourself, saying, 'Geez, am I selling my daughter short?'"*
>
> *Lazenby Blaser's initial visit to the playground was four years ago. Since then, she has had another disquieting thought. "My daughter is 9, and you know what? They may have been right about her," she said. "I'm afraid she may not be able to play in high school. Her skill level may be below those that have been playing year-round since they were really young."*[72]

The noted sports sociologist Jay Coakley recommends that children not begin seriously competitive play until about the age of 12, a recommendation others have endorsed.[73] Yet many clubs and sports associations maintain "travel teams" starting as young as age 8 or 9.[74] In warm-climate San Diego, for instance, ten-year-old baseball players play as many as 80 games a year (accompanied by twice-a-week practices).[75]

The "travel team" stratum of youth sports has exploded in the last twenty years. Travel teams grew out of recreational league play, as players, parents, and coaches sought more and better venues in which to compete. The teams mushroomed in popularity as new leagues were formed to promote their play, tournaments proliferated to match the best against the best, and large indoor facilities multiplied in suburban areas permitting year-round training and competition.

Financial costs to parents can be substantial. A season's registration fee includes not only league and club dues but often charges for coaches and trainers, who, especially in the older age brackets (U14 and up) in top competitive divisions, get paid for their services. Season fees of $2,500 and more are not rare and in a sport like soccer that plays both a spring and fall season, $5,000 can represent the bottom rung of the expense-ladder.

A top soccer team may play one or two preseason tournaments in March and again in September – tournaments often a hundred miles or more distant, necessitating travel and lodging costs apart from tournament fees. It may play a mid-season or summer tournament as well, even traveling overseas. Major regional and national tournaments are big affairs. The Virginia Beach Columbus Day 2003 tournament – a mid-prestige event – attracted 800 teams from Connecticut, Ohio, Ontario, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. The Dallas Cup 2003 – a high-prestige event – included 148 select teams from New Mexico, California, Virginia, Nevada, Ohio, Illinois, Florida, Wisconsin, New Jersey, New York, Kansas, Georgia – and Mexico, Canada, England, Ireland, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Venezuela.[76]

Likewise, a select girls' fastpitch softball team can spend the season barnstorming from one tournament to the next. To take a typical case, the Chesapeake Orions U12 team played six weekend tournaments in nearby Virginia Beach between February 14 and August 17, 2003 – and tournaments in Orlando, Florida; Seaford, Delaware; Salem, Virginia; Williamsburg, Virginia; and Rock Hill, South Carolina. All except the Williamsburg tournament required overnight lodging.[77]

A family with two or three children on travel teams can find itself rapidly mounting the rungs of the expense-ladder. In sports requiring costly equipment or costly playing sites (for example, at skating rinks, ice time can go for $200 an hour), even higher rungs of the ladder beckon – especially so when the parents add to the list by reaching for the newest competitive edge for their children, namely personal trainers and private coaching.[78]

At first impression, the "travel team" phenomenon seems to bear out the contention that youth sports in the United States have become too competitive and too demanding. Children are channeled into single-sport specialization at an early age. If they try to play more than one sport, they run into sticky scheduling conflicts and, more importantly, over-tax their young bodies.[79] They face pressures to perform well and their games are always high-stakes affairs.[80] The intensity of practice and play burns them out in a few years, so contend the critics. According to one sports psychologist, "about three fourths of children involved in organized sport drop out by age 13." The travel team phenomenon has taken the "fun" out of youth sports.[81]

Indeed, one critic maintains that "we have a youth sports system that is wildly out of control."[82] His sentiment is echoed by a recent report that proclaims, "Youth sport has become a hotbed of chaos, violence, and mean-spiritedness."[83] Another critic, fed up with contemporary sports at all levels, recommends an alternative: *music*. Playing in a band or singing in a chorus requires of youth many of the same attributes as a team sport – perseverance, self-discipline, dedication, and the like. "When comparing music with our current elitist, win-at-all-costs youth, interscholastic, and intercollegiate sports programs," he writes, the case for music wins hands down.[84]

No doubt the proliferation of competitive youth sports has brought with it a train of abuses,[85] but the picture drawn by the critics is largely hyperbole. First of all, the striking figure offered above by the sports psychologist has to be put in context. That 75 percent of children drop out of organized sport by age 13 is not so astonishing if we recall the 35 percent annual attrition rate, and recall further that most of the sports-leavers quit because their interests have become focused on new endeavors, not because of negative experiences with sport. Moreover, the "75 percent"

figure refers to *all* organized youth sports, the bulk of which remains recreational and low-key. Neighborhood kids who at six and seven years old join a baseball team for camaraderie and fun find in four or five years their interests as well as their physical development diverging. Some are well-coordinated and successful at throwing and hitting, and leave the practice field only when forced to by encroaching darkness. Others have put on weight or gotten gangly and find practice drills tedious and unrewarding. They don't get to play very much anymore, and are just as happy not to because they don't want the spotlight to shine on their failure to catch an easy grounder or throw accurately to first base. They leave baseball for something else – a martial arts class, piano lessons, scouting, or some other activity they find rewarding. The kids that remain go on to play a more serious level of recreational baseball or join a travel team. The normal physical and emotional development of kids from age 5 or 6 – when most start recreational sports – to age 12 or 13 provides a natural winnowing of participants even when coaches and parents are making sport the best it can be.

Nor is win-at-all costs the dominant ethos in every sports club. Consider the McLean Youth Soccer (MYS), an association in one of the wealthiest Virginia suburbs of Washington, D. C. MYS provides three levels of competition: an in-house recreational program serving 3000 players; a travel team program serving 500 players; and at the pinnacle a "premier" program serving 150 players.[86] The premier program has its own technical director, Curt Onalfo, the assistant coach of the United States national soccer team and the operator of a major training academy in the Washington metropolitan region. The older travel teams – regular and premier – often have professional coaches. In addition, they use professional trainers. The McLean Mambas, a U14 girls team playing in the top girls league in the Washington area, employs Jacqui Little, a former player on the Washington Freedom in the WUSA, and Nick Romando, the current starting goalkeeper for DC United in the MLS.

That MYS teams can afford professional assistance of this caliber speaks to the high disposable income of the average McLean resident. And this professional assistance makes the association's travel teams very competitive. Nevertheless, the MYS travel team manual expresses a sporting philosophy that puts competition in its proper place. The association measures a team's success not by its won-loss record but by how hard and well it performs on the field. Coaches are expected to put "having fun" high on the list of team achievements; maintain small rosters (so that some players are not languishing on the bench); remain calm and quiet during games; and avoid overburdening players with practice and fitness training. What MYS looks for in a coach is not the savvy of a master tactician or the severity of a hard taskmaster, but the ability to teach the fundamental skills of soccer to kids. [87]

Is the McLean association an exception to the win-at-all cost ethos that "pervades sport at every level,"[88] an outlier to the "harsh competitive ethic of our contemporary culture"?[89] Then let's look away from the Washington suburbs to the American heartland. The Dubuque Avalanche, a U13 girls' team puts its basic value this way: "Win, lose, or tie, if you have given 100 percent when you walk off the field, you have nothing to be ashamed of and should not have any regrets."[90] The Avalanche is part of the Dubuque Soccer Club, whose mission statement indicates two basic aims: to (i) provide developmental and competitive soccer play for youth and (ii) "build teamwork, confidence, good sportsmanship, self-discipline, self-development, and leadership in players, coaches, parents, and volunteers."[91] Apart from its travel teams, the Club runs a developmental program involving 500 kids on short-sided teams (3v3, 5v5, 8v8, depending on the age bracket). As the Club's director of coaching puts it, the short-sided game makes it "fun for the 99% of us who will grow up [not to be top amateur or professional soccer players but] to be doctors, teachers, plumbers, truck drivers, and John Deere workers."[92]

The Dubuque Club belongs to the Illowa Soccer League, along with the Cedar River Soccer Association in Cedar Rapids, Iowa (population 110,000). The Cedar River Association is a "strong parent-directed organization committed to excellence" by using nationally licensed, professional coaches, developing and accommodating players at varied skill levels, assuring that all players have fun, and fostering a strong work ethic, sportsmanship, and teamwork in its participants.[93] Another Illowa member, the Cedar Valley Youth Soccer Association, centered in Cedar Falls (population 35,000), is a "recreationally-oriented association with a strong emphasis on participation and sportsmanship." It has no professional coaching staff and it does not keep teams together from year to year but "reshuffles the deck" each year where feasible.[94] By contrast, the Iowa City Alliance Soccer Club is a smaller organization fielding professionally coached travel teams. It aims to assure "opportunities for all interested youth to have safe fun in competitive soccer," to develop in players "good learning habits," and to foster "fair play and sportsmanship."[95] The Moline Soccer Club, like the Cedar Valley association, supports high quality recreational soccer, emphasizing "sportsmanship and fair play" and the "value of participation over winning."[96] The East Moline Silvis Soccer Club supports travel teams. It relies entirely on volunteer rather than professional coaches, and a $35 registration fee enrolls a player for the whole year. (A player enrolling in an Iowa City Alliance Soccer Club team, on the other hand, can expect to pay about $600 a year, apart from the cost of equipment.) FC America, another small club in the Moline area (Moline, East Moline, and Rock Island together have a population of about 100,000), fields competitive teams devoted to learning soccer "FUNdamentals."[97] Finally, across the Mississippi River, in Davenport, Iowa (population 95,000), the Quad City Strikers Soccer Association believes "in fair play and sportsmanship" and that "sports is not about short-term winning or losing, but rather long-term goals." It subscribes to the philosophy that "having fun is an important part of life and soccer in the right environment is fun."[98]

B. COMPETITION'S ROLE UNDERSTOOD

A cursory look at the nominal aims of youth sports clubs, leagues, national associations, and public recreation programs reveals a widespread belief by organizers, officials, coaches, and parents that competition should not get out of hand. Competition is a vehicle for youth development and enjoyment, thus subservient to broader goals. But how well are these nominal aims put into practice? How well do clubs, leagues, coaches, parents, and players adhere to the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship? How often do teams really act as if they believed the motto of the Dubuque Avalanche, that if you've played your best, you can leave the field with pride, win or lose? Stories in the popular media highlight incidents of cheating,[99] violence,[100] and a missing sense of proportion,[101] but what they *do not* provide are reliable, data-based answers to the questions just posed. Nor does the academic literature.[102]

Some of those critical of youth sports view competition as inevitably corrosive of good values, pitting team against team and athlete against athlete in a zero-sum contest. To avoid "fostering conflict" – as competition does – and to teach "humanistic" and "caring" values, it is better, the critics argue, to involve children in "cooperative" games where they must help one another to succeed.[103] Yet the conclusion that sports competition is inevitably corrosive must be adduced from evidence, not deduced from the concept. Even the critics concede that athletic competition can be understood as a *means* – perhaps an indispensable means – to something else, namely what Craig Clifford and Randolph Feezell call a "mutual striving for excellence."[104]

The idea is this. In some kinds of games, there is a very tight conceptual link between competition and performance, in other kinds a looser link. For example, the solitary high jumper could simply strive to jump higher and higher, letting the height of the bar itself fix her motivation; or the solitary bowler could measure his success entirely by the number of pins he can knock down in a fixed

number of bowls (in which case bowling would be like mountain climbing, a striving to overcome a barrier that is "just there"). By contrast, a solitary tennis player can't strive for anything. There is no game of tennis without a competitor. The same is true of team sports like baseball and basketball.

More importantly, even when it is not built into the very idea of a particular performance, competition serves as a vital measure and spur. When a high jumper competes against another, the raising of the bar is not just a function of her own success. It depends on the success of her competitor as well. She can't rest on a performance that's her best ever, not if the other jumper has matched and exceeded it. She must either accept that her best is not good enough or summon up a perfection of technique and effort that she didn't know she had. If she succeeds it is because she has been pushed to succeed.

This phenomenon is especially clear in team sports. In a basketball game, for example, the other team can be thought of as the "barrier" that must "yield" to your team's efforts (the way the bowling pins "yield" to the roll of your ball). However, in basketball's case the "barrier" is not static, it is dynamic. Your team's very effort to make the barrier yield can actually make it more resistant to yielding. That is to say, your team's good play can make the other team "raise its game."[105] Thus your team has got to respond with intensified play or fail to make the "barrier" yield. The competition creates a reciprocal feedback loop – your team's best play strengthens rather than weakens the barrier by eliciting the other team's best play, which forces your team to play yet better, which leads the other team to play yet better, which forces your team . . . and so on. Should your team win, it has been forced to levels of execution and effort it had not thought itself capable of; should it lose, it may still have exceeded its previous best play. That's why the Dubuque Advantage U13 team has it right when it says that the point of sports is to leave your best game on the field. The elemental goal in sports is *self-overcoming*. Competition is what draws from the self – whether an individual or collective self – a level of performance better than its previous best. Since each team is lifting its level of play in response to the other, Clifford and Feezell are right to term competition a "mutual striving for excellence." Each team is driving the other to perform better than it otherwise would – or could.[106]

Self-overcoming is the elemental end around which sport is ordered. Seen in this light, competition provides no incentive to cheat. Fair play is built into the process. Your team hasn't really succeeded in its end if it wins not by raising its game to a new level but by cheating. No one surpasses her best by breaking the rules. However, incentives to break the rules can be supplied by other goals that intrude on, and even trump, the elemental organizing principle of sports – external goals as pedestrian as wanting the adulation of the crowd and as weighty as wanting wealth beyond measure. When two heavyweights are fighting a championship bout worth $30,000,000 to the winner, being *acclaimed the winner* becomes more important than *actually being the winner.* The boxing commission had better be on guard.

Competition, then, is essential to athletics and when its proper role is fully appreciated it provides no incentives for bad sportsmanship. Nevertheless, not just the intrusion of external goals but commonplace emotional resistance to defeat can – and frequently does – lead players to forget sportsmanship and throw elbows, slide with cleats raised, make dangerous tackles, talk trash, and taunt injured opponents. The spirit of sportsmanship is easily eroded and coaches, parents, league officials, and other interested parties must be always vigilant to keep its spirit predominant.

C. COMPETITION, PARTICIPATION, AND FUN

Even when competition is understood properly, however, the question remains whether intense competition for young participants is consistent with "fun." As we saw above, many clubs and organizations specify "having fun" as an important

dimension of their programs. Likewise, writers about youth sports often float the worry that intense competition takes the "fun" out of sports participation.[107] These writers never formally define 'fun,' however, and this is not a harmless omission since so many things can travel under that title. Consider two scenarios. One: a 14-year-old at practice runs laps as part of fitness training. He does not enjoy the actual running but nevertheless finds gratification in completing an arduous routine that supports his success on the playing field Saturday or Sunday. Two: while warming up for the championship game, a player feels considerable anxiety; and playing the game itself is for her an unremittingly intense affair, a desperate struggle to hold her position or defend her man or make a play. If her team wins, her elation is unbounded; if it loses, her dejection is inconsolable (at least for a while). In either case, however, she will forever look back on the "thrill" of playing for the championship; and she will take pride in having performed well under such pressure. These two scenarios show that a *complex* of feelings, sensations, and reflections, extended over time, accompanies sports play – a complex not easily reduced to the simple notion of "having fun."

When writers speak of "fun," they typically mean doing something that produces immediate pleasure or excitement, doing something that doesn't have the stamp of "work" on it. Now, clearly, even in adult sports, applied imagination can render fitness exercises and skill-development drills less tedious than they might otherwise be. The exercises and drills themselves can become small competitions in which teammates vie to win a race carrying on their backs fellow-players, or to keep the ball away from "defenders" in the middle of a circle by quickly passing it around the perimeter, or to make the most free throws and get rewarded by a rest break while others run laps around the gym floor.

"Fun" can also mean "no disappointment." Games with "no losers" are more fun for children – so goes the argument. However, even writers who are concerned to make competitions more child-friendly by modifying games to let everyone "win" concede that "young people usually prefer the 'real game'."[108] Whatever fun children find in their informal, self-directed games, they also turn out to be "serious" about real sports.[109] An ethnographic study by Sally Anderson is instructive on this point. She studied two organizations in Denmark, a community gymnastics association and a private *capoeira* school (*capoeira* is a Brazilian hybrid of dance and martial arts). The gymnastics association organized training around a popular set of notions about children: that they "are lively, playful, full of fantasy, easily bored, and inattentive;" and that they like "variety to prevent boredom, lots of pop music, 'work' disguised as 'play,' exercises to fit age groups, and new experiences."[110] The *capoeira* school took all comers over the age of 12 and mixed adults and youth together, distinguishing students only by their ability level (beginner or advanced). The training proceeded in a business-like manner under the guidance of the *capoeira* teacher, adults and youth treated as peers, the better students – adult or youth – helping the less adept.[111] The *capoeira* youth progressed steadily toward mastery of their art. The gymnastics students applied themselves with varying degrees of seriousness. During exercises they "chatted, laughed, daydreamed," or acted in other ways that demonstrated their casual interest in what was happening.[112] When one of the *capoeira* students joined the gymnastics group one day, he

> *was able to do both push-ups and stretching exercise with ease, something the other boys found difficult, uninteresting, or both. He could also perform cartwheels without effort and in general tended to be both willing and able to do what the instructors asked of him.*[113]

One need not over-generalize from this case to caution that young people may be more serious about their games, and less "childish" – less in need of fun, amusement, and work disguised as play – than critics of youth sports believe.[114] The

challenge for youth sports organizations, and those who study them, is to find the middle ground between two extremes. At one extreme, adults can forget that youth sport is for the enjoyment of the youthful participants; they try to "[convert] children into mini-adults."[115] At the other extreme adults can render "enjoyment" into a notion that excludes the serious approach to sports favored by many boys and girls. Youth participants no less than adults are capable of delayed gratification, even if the gratification comes in a bittersweet package. Youth participants no less than adults can set high goals for themselves and work hard to achieve them. When they succeed, success' value-conferring shadow stretches back over and redeems the many efforts that produced it. Fun is a pale substitute for success – or even the striving for it.

Without gainsaying concerns about the intensified competition prevalent in contemporary organized youth sports, a bit of perspective is in order. The critic quoted earlier who was fed up with competitive youth sports and recommended music as a better way to imbue kids with traits like teamwork, self-discipline, and perseverance hadn't paid enough attention to his local high school marching band. It, too, competes: in local events; in one or more of the 700 major regional, state, multi-state, and national band competitions every April through December; and possibly in an international competition – there is one in Italy in July and the other in Spain in October.[116] For example, if the critic's local high school band happened to be "The Pride of the Bluegrass" at Lafayette High School in Lexington, Kentucky, he would have observed the following schedule: a week of band camp in July, another in August; extensive rehearsals once school began; trips to two band competitions in Kentucky and one in Ohio; a trip to the state competition in Bowling Green followed by a trip to Indianapolis for the Bands of America Regional Competition. These competitions had to be fitted around performances at home football games and at the Governor's inauguration parade.[117] If the critic's local band happened instead to be the Minutemen Marching Band of Washington Township High School in Sewell, New Jersey (20 miles southeast of Philadelphia), he would have observed an even more frenetic schedule: seven competitions (one hosted by the Minutemen) in the fall of 2003 followed by a trip to Scranton, Pennsylvania for the Atlantic Coast Championships and then on to Jacksonville, Florida, to compete with scores of other bands in the Gator Bowl (where the Minutemen took away a fourth place in the Parade and a third place in the Field Show). Nor was there much post-Gator Bowl rest for the weary Minutemen. They resumed indoor practice during the winter and spring of 2004.[118] To remain at the top requires year-round effort.

The tedium of rehearsal and drill and the stress of group performances were not the only experiences awaiting some members of these two high school bands in 2003. The better players auditioned individually (perhaps after a preliminary round of cuts) for a spot in their all-state bands. Now, while playing on a competitive sports team can generate plenty of nervousness and tension, the psychologist Michael Passer concludes from the evidence he has examined that nothing in team sports supplies the anxiety level induced by solo music audition.[119] Any reader who recalls her own solo recitals in front of judges will likely offer an emphatic confirming nod.

D. NOT ENOUGH?

Although youth participation in sports is widespread across the country, it is unevenly dispersed. In many areas sports clubs and associations have burgeoned and opportunities abound while in others opportunities have diminished to the vanishing point. Martha Ewing and associates report that sports "[p]articipation rates in Detroit . . . have dropped to approximately 10 percent of the children compared to 75-80 percent in the suburbs."[120] This same contrast between hard-up inner city and affluent suburb can be told about many metropolitan areas across the country.[121] Not only do financially straitened urban jurisdictions lack flourishing private athletic associations and

plentiful safe playing areas, their high schools maintain limited interscholastic sports programs that limp along with meager budgets, inadequate facilities, and old equipment.[122]

Inner city children are not in danger of adult-organized games overwhelming their spontaneous self-organized play. In fact, according to one study, fourth graders in an impoverished community did not even "know how to self-organize and play relatively simple games such as kickball."[123] In gym class these children were unable to sustain vigorous physical activity more than a few minutes. At home they led sedentary lives and

> *had little or no exposure to physical activity outside of school. Unsafe places in which to play, overburdened caregivers, overpopulated and small housing conditions, and limited role models were attributed to the children's limited exposure to physical activity.*[124]

IV. WHAT CAN WE CONCLUDE?

Most pre-1990s studies of sports participation typically involved very small samples of participants in particular settings. The small sample sizes and the lack of uniformity in variables identified for scrutiny make these studies relatively uninformative about cause and effect. Newer studies that rely on rich data sets – sets not available to an earlier generation of scholars – more successfully control variables statistically to cut through the fog of correlation. For example, Mark Lopez and Kimberlee Moore, in "Participation in Sports and Civic Engagement," the Fact Sheet that accompanies this critical survey, use the 2002 National Youth Survey of Civic Engagement to identify several civic outcomes that might reasonably be attributed to sports participation. They find a weak but positive relationship between participation in high school sports and some desirable civic behavior.

Other recent studies make use of two richly informative longitudinal surveys generated by the National Center for Educational Statistics in the U. S. Department of Education. One is the High School and Beyond (HSB) series, containing an extensive array of information derived from two cohorts, namely sophomores and seniors in high school in 1980. Both cohorts were surveyed in 1980 and then three more times at two-year intervals. The sophomore cohort was surveyed again in 1992. The second data set is the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) of 1988. This study began tracking a cohort of 8th-graders initially interviewed in 1988 and re-interviewed every two years since. Both longitudinal surveys involved scores of thousands of students, selected to be representative of their age groups.[125]

The general upshot of recent analyses of these surveys is positive. Sport participation seems beneficial, as measured against several desiderata. For example, Sabo, Melnick, and Vanfossen analyzed the HSB data to conclude that participating in sports in high school made students more likely to attend college.[126] Hanson and Kraus explored the NELS data to determine whether sports participation made female high school students more likely to take, and be successful in, math and science courses, and concluded that "white and Hispanic girls who participate in sport have a tremendous advantage in all aspects of science – achievement, course-taking, and attitudes."[127] Marsh, using the HSB data, found that "participation in sport favorably affected (in order of size of the effect) social self-concept, academic self-concept, educational aspirations 2 years after high school, attending university, educational aspirations in the senior year, being in the academic track, school attendance, taking science courses, time spent on homework, parental involvement, parental educational aspirations, taking math courses, and taking honors courses."[128] Broh, analyzing data from the NELS, found that "participation in interscholastic sports during the 10th and 12th grades has small but consistent benefits for students' grades . . . even after [self-selection] characteristics are taken into account."[129] Analysis of the HSB data underlies the conclusion by McNeil that "participation in the athletic arena significantly reduces the student's

likelihood of dropping out, whereas participation in the academic and vocational spheres does not," a conclusion that holds up even when the self-selection phenomenon is accounted for.[130]

These studies differ, however, in their depictions of the particular causal mechanisms – those "intertwined and interwoven threads of influence, subtle and not always easily analyzed" – that yield positive results from sports participation. For McNeal and Marsh, being on a high school sports team makes players more attached to their school and its academic values.[131] For Hanson and Kraus, being on a school team inducts players into important networks, provides a source of status, and fosters character traits that prove valuable in academic work. Girls who perform in what was formerly a "male" domain – sports – are advantaged in performing in other "male" domains – science and math.[132] Broh finds the good effects of sport working through two mechanisms. Sport *does* build character, in his opinion; that is, it promotes individual traits that pay off in academic achievement. Furthermore, it increases participants' "social capital" by enhancing their involvement in peer, family, and other valuable networks.[133]

These studies, for the most part, focus on high school sports, so they tell us nothing directly about the impact on younger children who play on club teams, whether recreational or travel. Moreover, the efficacy of sports participation is measured in these studies against a limited set of outcomes: better grades, completion of school, enhanced self-esteem, good work ethic, and the like. These outcomes seem tied to "character" as a mediating factor, since perseverance, self-confidence, disposition to cooperate with teachers, and other individual traits that plausibly foster academic achievement can be counted as aspects of character. However, none of these studies tells us anything about the effect of sports participation on other aspects of character – good or bad – such as propensity to cheat, dedication to fair play, respect for others, or tendency to view the world selfishly. Nor do these studies link up with those that do try to trace connections between sports participation and these distinctively moral aspects of character.

Despite a vast literature on youth sports participation – much of which is not touched on here – we actually know very little about this pervasive dimension of young lives. Is there more undesirable competition now than in the past? Considering the whole of formal, structured sports play by children, adolescents, and college-age youth, what proportion of competition today is inappropriate, excessive, unhealthy? People are quite willing to make up their minds on the basis of anecdotal evidence and inflammatory media reports but we possess no genuine data base that could anchor confident answers to these questions, even if we could agree on what is inappropriate, excessive, and unhealthy.

Studies that show sports participation on the whole beneficial don't answer structural and cost-benefit questions. If, for example, playing on a high school sports team increases academic achievement, we must ask at what cost? After all, school systems (and communities that support them) invest resources in athletics that could be diverted to other activities that also improve academic achievement or yield other goods of a different kind. What represents a sensible trade-off? Further, if sports participation is good, why need it be lodged in high schools rather than in clubs? Is the impressive growth of club-based sports in the last thirty years to be regretted or welcomed?[134]

How does sports participation affect children in their early years, ages 5 to 12?[135] Are the typical forms of their participation appropriate to their ages? (T-ball and 3-sided micro soccer certainly seem child-friendly for very young kids; eleven-year-olds seem to thrive on baseball.)

What reform measures seem easiest to implement? What measures will have the greatest yield? What abuses need most urgent attention?

National, state, and local associations, federations, and leagues of all sorts monitor, oversee, and

regulate youth sports. They have in place codes of ethics, rules of play, and coach-education programs meant to assure sportsmanship, safe play, and stimulating competition for kids. USA Hockey, for example, the governing body of ice hockey in the United States, has a "zero tolerance" policy in place for all youth hockey games – zero tolerance of bad sportsmanship of all sorts.[136] The National Federation of State High School Associations, in partnership with the American Sports Education Program, offers training and certification for coaches of interscholastic teams. The American Sports Education Program, run by the sports publisher Human Kinetics, also offers on-line, instructor-based education for those involved in other youth sports as well.[137] The Positive Coaching Alliance, founded at Stanford University in 1998, claims to have provided workshops for 40,000 coaches, parents, and leaders, in partnership with 300 youth sports organizations, cities, and schools.[138] The National Youth Sports Coaches Association purports to have trained 1.8 million coaches in 2,600 community organizations (thus remedying to some extent the deficiencies noted by Alex Poinsett).[139] Its umbrella organization, the National Alliance for Youth Sports, offers a booklet, *Recommendations for Communities*, listing basic steps to take in creating or running youth sports programs.[140] (The recommendations were compiled in conjunction with the National Recreation and Park Association.) U. S. Youth Soccer, through its state associations, maintains an extensive system of coach training and licensing. It also runs a parent education program.[141] Parent education in all sports is made mandatory by many county and municipal recreation departments, using tools provided by the Parents Association for Youth Sports, another offshoot of the National Alliance for Youth Sports.[142]

The Citizenship Through Sports Alliance – formed in 1997 by Major League Baseball, the National Football League, the National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, the National Junior College Athletic Association, the U. S. Olympic Committee, the National Federation of High School Associations, and the National Association of Collegiate Athletic Directors – is an ambitious attempt to build "a sports culture [at all levels] that encourages respect for self, respect for others, and respect for the game."[143] Among the resources it offers is a "community organizing tool kit," a set of guidelines and materials any group can use to form (or reform) a youth sports association so that it honors true sportsmanship.

Sports advocacy and information organizations abound. An interested parent or community leader can gain orientation from organizations as diverse as the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Mom's Team, both web-based sources of news and advice.[144]

V. THE MICROWORLD OF PARTICIPATION

At the outset, I suggested that understanding the "intertwined" and "subtle" influences of sports participation requires the tools of social science. We can conclude that social scientists have made some progress in illuminating the effects of sports participation on certain aspects of "character" – but the progress is limited and checkered. It is not clear, in fact, how social scientists can penetrate very deeply into character, something that is formed and refined in the microworld of everyday moral life.

Consider some of the dimensions of that microworld. Earlier, I observed that participating on a sports team requires an individual to subordinate herself to the team's needs. There is much more to this subordination than merely fulfilling roles and carrying out tactics on the field. A player who rides the bench may think she is better than those who start. She has to try to see herself – and her teammates – through the coach's eyes if she is to reconcile herself to her secondary place. She has to suppress jealousy toward other players and avoid conflicts that hurt team morale. At the same time she doesn't want to remain passive in the face of what she thinks

is an injustice. How, then, does she request – or demand – more playing time without being disruptive? Does she endure quietly, redoubling her efforts in practice to prove her worth as a starter – or does she slack off, since more effort doesn't seem to pay off? How assertive should she be, how submissive? For a young athlete in her early or mid-teens, these are complicated and vexing matters to work out.

Even if she succeeds at seeing matters through the coach's eyes, the player may still experience mental turmoil. Her sense of what's best for the team may conflict with the coach's policies. Perhaps the coach, in her view, allows too much negative chatter during practice – chatter in which teammates grouse at one another about failures to make a timely pass or execute a throw to the right base, chatter that carries over into games as well. Perhaps the coach seldom takes starters out of a game when they make mistakes but pulls the trigger quickly on substitutes when they commit errors. In these ways, so the player thinks, the coach is hurting team morale. But it is not her place to tell the coach his business, is it? So how does she make her views known? Does she talk covertly to other players about her concerns? Does she urge her parents to speak to the coach? Or does she urge them *not* to intervene, though they share her concerns?

Further complications offer themselves. For example, the good feelings a player has for her team may wash away under the stress of a losing season. She may begin to think she is wasting her talent on the team and should go elsewhere – but how does that honor solidarity, a value she's been vocally defending in past seasons? Is it morally better to stick with the team although a return to winning ways seems remote? Isn't it selfish to seek a better deal for oneself at the team's expense? On the other hand, how much self-sacrifice must a player make for the sake of loyalty? When does altruism cease to be admirable and become foolish? (Or, to vary the example, suppose the coach decides to let go a handful of players who've been stalwart contributors from the club's beginnings but don't have the skills needed now that the club has climbed to the highest levels of competition. Isn't it unacceptable to reward the dedication of this handful with such ruthless dismissal? Is winning such a valuable goal to warrant tossing aside considerations of past contribution? On the other hand, the team originally set for itself high goals. Does it now brush these goals aside for the sake of communal bonds? Whether a player is one of those dismissed or one of those retained, she has much to consider, many points of view to reconcile.)

These are typical of the challenges – character-building or character-deforming – that a player confronts every season, every game, every practice. She may resolve them in ways she regrets in hindsight, or in ways she builds upon as her sense of value matures, or in ways that pass quickly into the trash bin of forgotten episodes in her life. She may find her resolutions instructive in other dimensions of her life – in school, in personal relationships, in family affairs – as she recapitulates them in new circumstances or acts consciously to avoid following their lead.

However, the main effects of her reflections and choices as a player may actually lie dormant for a long time, coming into sharp relief only as she becomes a parent herself and watches her own child take up a sport. What she imparts to her child-athlete – by specific instruction or silent observation – may carry the distinctive stamp of experience forged on another playing field at another time.

Sports participation truly involves "many intertwined and interwoven threads of influences, subtle and not always easy to analyze." The challenge ahead for students of sport is to find effective ways to capture accurately these "threads of influence" and to generalize about them. This is a challenge we are a long way from meeting.

VI. APPENDIX A

A. SHIELDS AND BREDEMEIER

Over a twenty-year period David Shields and Brenda Jo Bredemeier have compiled an impressive body of work on sports participation and moral development. It is widely cited. Their 1995 book, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, has no peer. Their chapter, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," in the second edition of the *Handbook of Sport Psychology*, is the obvious starting-point for all students and scholars alike interested in sports and character.[145]

Their studies seem to support some arresting conclusions about sports. Bredemeier and Shields have shown, if their research is sound, that some college athletes use a "less mature" form of moral reasoning than their nonathletic peers[146] and that "children's participation in high contact sports is associated with less mature moral reasoning and greater self-reported tendencies to aggress."[147] A reader would be excused for thinking this is all bad news. After all, aggression, Shields and Bredemeier tell us, is "morally reprehensible," and sport participation seems to induce players to legitimate it by regressing to "egocentric reasoning."[148] Indeed, in one summation the two writers indict sport not only because it encourages "unbridled egocentrism" in players but also because it suppresses their "empathy." It is not surprising, then, when they conclude that present-day sport fosters the evil of "militarism." [149]

This is not a picture of sport to inspire its champions. Nor is it a picture that stays clearly in focus the more closely one reads Bredemeier and Shields. Instead, the picture keeps shifting, in part because Bredemeier and Shields are conceptually sloppy and in part because they are mesmerized by bad moral theory.

Take the matter of aggression. According to Shields and Bredemeier, in their studies athletes who were more aggressive displayed a "lower level" of moral reasoning – that is, reasoned at a lower developmental stage – than athletes who were less aggressive. To discover this connection, two things have to be measured in subjects: level of aggression and level of moral reasoning. In the case of aggression, Shields and Bredemeier do not measure it directly; instead, they have relied on (i) coaches' assessments of their players, (ii) players' responses to "aggression" hypotheticals, or (iii) an objective proxy. Before any of this measuring could get off the ground, however, the term 'aggression' had to be defined. Shields and Bredemeier adopted a definition from an earlier literature: aggression is *initiation of an attack with intent to injure*.[150]

At first blush, this definition seems highly confining. Very little happens on the playing field that counts as aggression by this account. With rare exceptions, most sports injuries – even at professional levels – result from unforeseeable events at best (the turf fails to yield and a sharply turning player tears a knee ligament; one player looses his balance and falls on another's ankle) and reckless play at worst (a pitcher persists in throwing high inside pitches though he knows he's losing his control). Moreover, the Bredemeier-Shields definition goes against the grain of ordinary usage. When players are called aggressive by coaches or commentators, they are usually singled out for one of a number of characteristics: fearlessness, risk-taking, spontaneity, attack-orientation ("attack" the ball, "attack" the plate, "attack" the basket), and the like.

Shields and Bredemeier are free, of course, to stipulate any meaning of 'aggression' they like. The problem is that they fail consistently to adhere to the meaning they've chosen. For example, in one study, as an "objective" measure of basketball players' aggressiveness, they tabulated players' fouls per minute played.[151] In another, they presented adolescent female soccer players with the following "aggression" scenario: a defender, Sue, can prevent an opponent from taking an unchallenged shot on goal only by successfully tackling the ball from behind. "Sue knows that tackling from behind is dangerous and [the

opponent] will probably get hurt."[152] In yet another study, to measure aggression children were asked to respond to a number of items, including this one: "You're running a long distance race, and one of the other runners comes up from behind, trips you, and runs on ahead. What would you do?" The children could choose among three options: forget about the trip, report it to a race official after the race, or catch up with the runner and get him back. The last choice represented an aggressive response to the situation.[153]

None of these cases – fouls, tackling from behind, or getting back at the runner – involves *intent to injure*. When a basketball player fouls another taking a shot, he is attempting to block or deflect the ball. In making her risky tackle, Sue is trying to sweep away the ball and prevent a shot. In returning the trip, the retaliating runner intends to even the score. Unless he deliberately smashes the other runner in the face to break his jaw, he neither intends nor causes injury.

These inconsistencies may not undermine the particular studies in which they occur but they do not give the reader much confidence in the aggression "scores" generated by Bredemeier and Shields. In the study that used fouls as an "objective" measure of players' aggression, the other measure used was coaches' rankings. Although Bredemeier and Shields tell us that they gave coaches "careful . . . instructions regarding the specific definition of aggression" at work in the study, we certainly can't attach much weight to the resultant rankings.[154] We have no basis for thinking the coaches applied the concept of "aggression" any less loosely and clumsily than Bredemeier and Shields themselves do.

In a 1986 study Shields and Bredemeier themselves saw the problem. They noted that the standard definition – aggression is an *attack* with *intent to injure* – is flabby and insufficiently discriminating.

> *'Attack' has referred to physical, verbal, or even nonverbal assaults, while the term 'injure' has been interpreted to include infliction of all noxious stimuli. Such a broad definition . . . places murder and a playful sock on the arm along a single continuum of aggressive acts. . .*[155]

Athletes commonly draw a distinction between robust play within the rules of the game that might "hurt" and real physical attack outside game skills (e. g., a deliberate elbow to the face). Yet, observed Bredemeier and Shields, "a qualitative distinction between [these] . . . two categories is blurred when all intentional hurting is placed on a single aggression continuum." Quite so. Given this drawback in the original definition, Bredemeier and Shields asked whether investigators should continue to define aggression as "intent to injure." In any case, they advised great caution in using the term 'aggression.'[156]

Unfortunately, Bredemeier and Shields didn't take their own advice to heart and continued to use the standard definition without indicating the exact range of actions picked out by the words 'attack' and 'injure.'[157] Neither have they discontinued citing their early studies as supplying unambiguous evidence of a correlation between aggression and low-level moral thinking.

Just as there are problems on the one side of the equation – measuring athletic aggression – there are problems on the other – measuring "moral maturity." Initially, Bredemeier and Shields worked from within the moral development theory of Lawrence Kohlberg. That theory postulates six stages of moral development ranging from a preconventional stage in which the moral agent calculates in terms of egocentric wants to a postconventional stage in which the agent thinks in terms of universal moral principles.[158] In a 1984 study, Bredemeier and Shields measured their subjects' moral developmental level by administering the Defining Issues Test (DIT), developed by James Rest to assess Kohlbergian stages using a simple, multiple choice questionnaire.[159] This test, wrote Bredemeier and Shields, provided "an objective measure of moral

development."[160]

By the next year, however, they had shifted to a different developmental account based on the work of Norma Haan. Haan formulated her theory explicitly in opposition to Kohlberg's, which portrayed the moral agent as embracing increasingly general and abstract moral principles as he matures. To this Kohlbergian picture – which, in her view reflected only the process of "learned sophistication" – Haan counterposed another: that of the agent in a particular, concrete context with a specific problem to solve. As Bredemeier and Shields present Haan, morality consists of *conflict*, *balance*, and the transition from the first to the second by means of *dialogue*. "Together we create moral agreements," writes Bredemeier.[161] Balance is reached, Shields and Bredemeier go on to note, when "all parties involved in a relationship are in basic agreement about respective rights, obligations, and privileges."[162]

The ability to take part in the "dialogic" process that creates agreements evolves through phases or orientations. In the *assimilative phase*, "moral balances are egocentrically constructed."[163] "Others' interests and needs are not given equal consideration to the self."[164] In the *accommodative phase*, individuals "subordinate their needs and interests to those of others."[165] Finally, in the *equilibration phase*, "all interests and needs [are coordinated] in an attempt to optimize situationally specific potentialities for mutually satisfying responses to interpersonal difficulties."[166]

To associate athletes' level of moral thinking with aggression, the former has to be measured. In a 1994 study of children at a camp, Bredemeier explained her measurement procedure:

> *The children's moral reasoning level was assessed by means of 45-minute individual interviews. . . . [Each] interview consisted of four moral dilemmas, two set in sport contexts and two reflecting daily life situations. . . . One sport and one life situation featured a girl forced to choose between honesty and keeping a promise to a girlfriend. The second set of sport and life stories featured boys faced with a decision about whether to risk hurting another boy to prevent him from continuing an unfair activity. Each dilemma was followed by a standard set of probe questions, with the interviewer free to ask additional probes to obtain clarifications. . . . The research associates who interviewed subjects . . . had previously completed a semester-long training program on Haan's interactional model of morality and the techniques of structural scoring. . . . Each rater assigned a major and minor score to each story. The major score reflected [the] moral level that most closely corresponded to the underlying structure of the reasoning offered, while the minor score reflected secondary themes presented by the respondent.*[167]

Beyond this assurance that the scorers were "well-trained," Bredemeier supplied the reader with no further illumination. Yet the scoring enterprise must have involved a great deal of subjectivity. Unlike application of the DIT, where scoring is pretty mechanical, or even use of the Kohlbergian Standard Issue Moral Judgment Interview, where the scorer is constrained by an elaborate formula, in an interactional morality interview the scorer has enormous latitude. "Because interactional moral performance is thought to be creative," writes Haan, "the [scoring] manual does not predetermine the formulations that will be scored."[168] The moral performance is "creative" because moral agents in any situation are (in Bredemeier's words) *negotiating* "interpersonal difficulties or potential conflicts of interest."[169] The outcome of the performance is not governed by an antecedent principle but constructed from the situation-specific materials at hand. This means that assessing the moral level of an interview-subject's response has to be a highly interpretive affair, and consequently depends on the assessor's own grasp of morality and its demands. "[O]nly the complexity of another human's mind," declares Haan, "has a chance of encompassing and fathoming the critical meanings" in the subject's response.[170] Now,

if that other human's mind – i.e., the scorer's moral imagination and sensitivity – turns out to be rather uncomplex and limited, then, even with a semester-long course in interactional morality or close familiarity with a scoring manual, the interviewer's score-assignments are likely to say more about her than about her interviewees.

Thus, although the essays by Bredemeier and Shields teem with correlations and regressions, the numbers plugged into their equations – numbers representing levels of athletes' moral thinking and levels of aggression – may have the substance of sand rather than stone. More importantly, Bredemeier and Shields's insecure grasp of the nature of Norma Haan's "interactional morality" threatens to subvert their very project. This point needs to be explained.

A.1. MORAL MATURITY: WHAT ARE PSYCHOLOGISTS LOOKING FOR?

When social scientists describe moral development, what are they describing? Are the most morally mature people those who consistently make morally right choices? If this is the criterion, then moral psychology is a branch of morality itself, and social scientists are moralists. On its surface, this picture derives support from Haan's own account of "interactional morality." Recall that the equilibration phase of moral development – as described by Bredemeier – is one in which "moral balances" reflect a certain desideratum: "all interests and needs [are coordinated] in an attempt to optimize situationally specific potentialities for mutually satisfying responses to interpersonal difficulties." This looks like a straight-forward *moral* criterion, on the same order as the utilitarian's famous principle endorsing only those "moral balances" that maximize everyone's well-being. Haan, herself, doesn't shy from this way of understanding her theory:

> *The question for researchers in social science then becomes clear: Are there common characteristics of humans and their social interactions that invariably result in common but tacit undertakings about the nature and ground of morality? If such a moral ground – an Ought – exists as a universal agreement, the differing, practical instances of morality that can be observed . . . could be alternative manifestations of the same underlying Ought. The current search, then, is for an Ought common to humankind...*[171]

The tenets of interactional morality – especially the characterization of the equilibration stage as most adequate – rest on an explicit moral ground, namely "that a person's view of what is good for him or her and the other's good *should* be served as equally as possible...[I]n both process and outcome, equality is the cherished moral value."[172]

For Haan, when psychological researchers elicit from subjects responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas, the researchers must inevitably assess "the *moral adequacy* of the dialogues and resolutions they witness."[173] She takes Kohlberg to be misguided in claiming *empirical* validation for his stages when, in fact, they are "based on moral grounds," as are her own stages.[174]

Bredemeier and Shields followed Haan's lead. Consequently, their assigning of particular pieces of thinking by their athlete-subjects to different "developmental" levels involved (implicitly if not explicitly) nominating some of the pieces as morally inferior. Nevertheless, they felt as social scientists fully justified in their approach, taking refuge in two (specious) syllogisms from Haan. The first: "(a) implicit value assumptions are inherent in all scientific investigation, (b) moral research does not require commitment to any additional values and, therefore, (c) research on morality can be scientific." The second syllogism: (a) values implicit in science are egalitarian; (b) therefore scientists are warranted in taking the basic value in morality to be egalitarian. This latter is a "thin" assumption for social scientists to make, insist Bredemeier and Shields, because it does not

> *resolve all moral disputes. Morally*

> *mature persons can arrive at divergent positions in response to the same moral dilemma. In such cases, the social scientist cannot designate one position as better than another without transgressing the bounds of science and entering the domain of philosophical ethics."*[175]

Thin or not, if Haan's egalitarian assumption (embedded in her equilibration phase) doesn't resolve all moral disputes, it does stamp a solution on some of them, and Bredemeier and Shields have already stepped into the "domain of philosophical ethics" whether they intended to or not.[176]

In a 2001 essay, Shields and Bredemeier reflect again on the proper role of the social scientist. They claim that as scientists they are exploring not the *content* of moral reasoning by their subjects but its *structure*. They analogize their inquiries to that of the structural linguist, who seeks to uncover the deep grammatical structure of language. Just as structural linguists are not concerned about the truth of particular sentences a speaker might utter,

> *[w]hen structural developmentalists assess moral development, they are not analyzing the correctness of a person's moral beliefs. People who are equally mature may hold very different beliefs about moral issues. . . . [S]tructural developmentalists are interested in the relative adequacy of the structure that generates . . . beliefs.*[177]

But when are people equally mature? Haven't Haanian developmentalists already built the "correctness of a person's moral beliefs" right into their notion of maturity?

Shields and Bredemeier, in fact, have given different and conflicting accounts of what constitutes moral maturity and structural adequacy. For example, in a 1986 essay, Bredemeier and Shields observed that their athlete-subjects consistently drew a distinction between legitimate robust, hard-nosed play and illegitimate efforts to hurt or injure.

> *[W]ith the exception of one player, all athletes . . . agreed that mild expressions of aggression were legitimate. Is this acceptance of minor aggression necessarily an indication of moral immaturity? . . . We suggest that differing opinions about the legitimacy of various aggressive acts may have several sources including philosophical differences of opinion as well as inadequate moral reasoning.* There are two basic criteria, however, that we believe all developmentally mature individuals would implicitly or explicitly acknowledge*. First, any act intended to inflict an injury that reasonably could be predicted . . . [to] impair a person in his or her everyday life function [is illegitimate] . . . Second, any intentionally injurious act is illegitimate if it occurs apart from strategic employment of game-constitutive skills...*[178]

In this passage, the moral maturity of an agent corresponds to her affirming the content of two propositions.

By contrast, in their 2001 chapter in the *Handbook of Sports Psychology*, Shields and Bredemeier offer a properly structural characterization: development is "change . . . from less adequate to more adequate" structures, a change marked by increasing differentiation and integration.

> Differentiation *refers to increased refinement in the psychological structure that enables the individual to recognize and respond appropriately to more complex and more subtle aspects of experience.* Integration *is the structural reorganization through which external phenomena are comprehended in a more integrated and parsimonious manner.*[179]

This characterization of development *is* morally neutral. People with quite different moral outlooks

can possess full sensitivity to the complexity of situations and can integrate this complexity into views with ample scope and power to yield reasonable (though opposed) judgments. Moreover, this characterization is neutral between different developmental accounts like Kohlberg's and Haan's.

However, this neutral characterization of structure doesn't do any real work for Shields and Bredemeier, since they overlay it with Haan's interactional theory. And at different times they describe the latter in slightly but importantly different ways. At one place they say Haan's assimilative phase is one "in which moral balances are egocentrically constructed."[180] To this repeated depiction Bredemeier adds a small elaboration, describing the "maturing individual's *capacity* to engage in constructive moral dialogue" as evolving from an assimilative phase in which "others' interests and needs are not given equal consideration to those of the self."[181] Thus, the assimilative phase is not one in which people simply do favor moral balances that serve their self-interest but rather one in which they lack the capacity to "negotiate" other kinds of balances. This point becomes clearest in their 2001 essay in the *Handbook of Sports Psychology,* where Shields and Bredemeier note that in the assimilative phase, the egocentric person is not selfish but, "due to developmental limitations, is unable to comprehend with equal clarity and urgency the felt needs and desires of others."[182]

A.2. GAME THINKING

Why is it important to tease out the various accounts offered by Shields and Bredemeier of the assimilative phase? It is important because it lets us see how the centerpiece of their work – their theory of "game thinking" – falls apart. In their studies Shields and Bredemeier find that their subjects score "higher" on life-hypotheticals than game-hypotheticals.[183] Sport reasoning, they find,

> *is much more egocentric than life reasoning . . . Our interviews led us to conclude that when people enter sport they tend to shift their moral perspective in the direction of egocentric reasoning.*[184]

Now, if the claim here amounted to the proposition that sports competitors are single-minded in their pursuit of victory, "game thinking" would be no novelty and Shields and Bredemeier would have discovered nothing. They are quite aware that different contexts license different kinds of behavior. In a football stadium, for example, fans are permitted to scream and yell as loudly as they want whereas such behavior would be wholly inappropriate in a department store, a theater, or a church. When different contexts legitimate different conduct, Bredemeier and Shields call this a "first-order" change. This is not what goes on in sports play, they insist. Their interviews show a "second-order" change, "an alteration in the underlying pattern of decision-making or justificatory reasoning." The "internal structure" of game reasoning is "regressive-like . . . paralleling a lower level of maturity in many respects."[185] A "transformation" in moral reasoning has taken place, they contend.[186]

However, their interviews don't show any such thing. Shields and Bredemeier discover only that their subjects – athletes and non-athletes alike – focus more on self-regarding goals when they respond to sports-hypotheticals than when they respond to life-hypotheticals. To indicate "second-order change" taking place, this differential response must indicate that when they play sports athletes *regress* in the sense that they *become incapable* of understanding their opponent's interests. They must suffer diminished capacity to "negotiate" egalitarian "moral balances."

Now, individuals at an assimilative phase of moral maturity focus on their own success; and athletes in games focus on their own success. But to conclude from these two propositions as Shields and Bredemeier do that athletes in their games are reasoning at an assimilative level elevates the Fallacy of an Undistributed Middle into a scientific procedure. The slight equivocation, already noted,

in the way Shields and Bredemeier describe the assimilative phase – as a phase exhibiting a kind of reasoning some people might favor or as a phase exhibiting a kind or reasoning some people cannot transcend because of developmental limitations – leads them into the conflation of structure and content. This conflation is evident in one of their formulations of game reasoning (partially quoted just above): sport, they say, "elicits a *transformation* of moral reasoning such that egocentrism, typically the hallmark of immature morality, becomes a valued and accepted *principle*."[187] This formulation, although it starts by hinting at structural change ("transformation"), ends by invoking content ("principle").

A.3. MORAL CONFUSION

Bredemeier and Shields are driven toward their game-reasoning thesis because they think it an implication of Haan's interactional morality. What happens in game reasoning, according to Shields and Bredemeier, is the "suspension of the typical moral obligation to equally consider the interests of all parties."[188] Here they fall into two errors. The first is thinking that "life" is generally governed by Haan's egalitarian principle and the second is thinking athletes suspend it in games.

Shields and Bredemeier follow Haan in seeing "life" as a set of negotiated moral balances among persons of different desires and needs. Further, only those moral balances generated by a "truth-identifying" dialogue are morally acceptable.

> *A truth-identifying dialogue is one in which all relevant parties are included, no party dominates, all parties have equal access to information pertinent to themselves and the situation, and a consensus is achieved. Thus, moral truth is created only when dialogue results in unforced and informed consensus that is pragmatically accepted by all relevant parties as mutually beneficial in their ongoing lives.*[189]

However, there is no such "equalization premise of everyday morality."[190] Everyday morality is saturated through and through with preexisting duties, rights, powers, and liberties. The main moral challenge facing most people most of the time is to carry out faithfully the responsibilities that go with their roles and offices. The convicted criminal has desires and needs different from those of the judge about to sentence him, no doubt, but moral balance is not achieved by having the two negotiate a consensual agreement. A teacher about to assign a deserved flunking grade to one of her students needn't take into account the disappointment of the student's grandmother, although she is an affected party. A straying husband thinking of mending his ways doesn't honor his marriage vows by assembling a pow-wow among himself, his mistresses, and his wife so that they can identify the course mutually beneficial to them all. An elderly woman who wants to leave all her money to Oxfam instead of her dissolute nephew need only consult her lawyer. A battered wife having taken refuge in a safe-house is not morally bound to assure that her loutish husband has "equal access to information pertinent to themselves and their situation," including information about her location.

There are certainly many situations in life where preexisting duties remain unclear or where countervailing moral forces come into play, situations where moral opacity and undetermined liberty make it incumbent on people who fall into conflict to "negotiate" their way to a fair outcome. But this is only a small part of everyday moral life. To offer the "equalization premise" as a moral constraint on action generally is silly.

Shields and Bredemeier are free to step directly into the domain of "philosophical ethics" if they wish and try to save their equalization principle by qualifying it in various ways. They might argue that the principle applies not directly to individual actions but to the rules, practices, and institutions under which individuals act. That is to say, a society's rules, practices, and institutions ought to be ones informed people of good-will assent

to. So amended, the principle still tells us nothing determinate about morality since people don't, in fact, universally assent to the rules, practices, and institutions under which they live. Perhaps, then, Shields and Bredemeier could qualify the principle further and have it say that rules, practices, and institutions do justice when they are such that all informed people of good will *would* assent to them *were* the people in a fair bargaining position and able to choose the basic institutional scheme for their common life. The problem with this step toward a standard contractarian conception of morality is that it moves the equalization principle far away from "everyday life" and the specific sports contexts to which Shields and Bredemeier want to apply it.

The real problem, however, is not that Shields and Bredemeier commit themselves to an inadequate and ill-defended moral view. The real problem is that they misapply the equalization principle to sport itself. Instead of indicting sports as a realm of egocentrism, if anything the principle does the reverse. Shields and Bredemeier glimpse this point in their 2001 essay in the *Handbook of Sport Psychology* but then let their insight slip away. Sports competition has no difficulty achieving and maintaining egalitarian moral balance, as Shields and Bredemeier there observe:

> *[I]n a game . . . competitors are in moral balance if they are in basic agreement about the informal norms of play and all parties are complying with those norms. . . . [If imbalance does occur, it can be restored. For example, if] a soccer player is tripped in violation of both the rules and informal player norms, the moral dialogue [between players] may take the form of the offended player's hitting the offending player with extra force during a later play to communicate [where the proper boundaries are and ought to remain].*[191]

Furthermore, as Bredemeier and Shields note elsewhere, in games "the process of fair competition is facilitated by each party assuming self-interest (or team interest) as the primary focus."[192] Thus, they go against their own insight when they then go on to claim that sport suspends the typical obligation to consider equally the interests of all parties.[193] On the contrary, sport is one of the few venues in life where the egalitarian principle is best met.

The clearly marked field of play, the rules, the refereeing, the matching together of teams with the same level of experience and same physical capacities, and the informal "boundary policing" that takes place during play – all of these establish and maintain a condition that takes account of participants' interests. All of the players want a chance to perform well and win. Those wants are served by a fair set of rules and a division of labor: once play starts, Team A tries to do well against Team B and is not terribly concerned if Team B is not doing well against it. This lack of concern is not somehow morally regrettable. When Shields and Bredemeier say that "[t]here is little room in sport for equally considering the desires, goals, and needs of opponents," they mean that *once play starts*, there is little room for Team A to consider (except tactically) Team B's desire to win.[194] So what? Why should there be room? If a member of Team A, after its having gone up a goal, is so moved by the laments of Team B's parents on the sidelines and by the visible demoralization of Team B's players on the field that she deliberately scores an own-goal to make things right, she is not displaying moral maturity but just its opposite.

One the other hand, if Shields and Bredemeier maintain that *before play starts* the sport context precludes consideration of the interests of all parties, then they contradict themselves. They've already noted, correctly, that everyone's interests – given fair rules of play in a well-refereed, evenly-matched contest – are facilitated by single-minded pursuit of winning.

In sum, despite its impressive credentials and great influence, the work of Bredemeier and Shields leaves a great deal to be desired. It makes many

important claims but conceptual sloppiness robs the claims of credibility. The athletes Bredemeier and Shields interview intuitively draw the right lines, but Bredemeier and Shields won't listen to them. The athletes refuse to be hobbled by an unsuitable definition of aggression. They distinguish between robust play and "boundary-policing," on the one hand, and dangerous play outside the constitutive skills and rules of the game, on the other. They know what is legitimate and what is not. They further understand that their single-focused pursuit of victory takes place within a fair and egalitarian contest that honors the desires of competitors all around. Their single-focused play doesn't make them inferior or immature moral thinkers.

B. STOLL, LUMPKIN, BELLER AND HAHM

Work generated out of Sharon Kay Stoll's Center for Ethics at the University of Idaho deserves a brief mention. Angela Lumpkin, Sharon Kay Stoll, and Jennifer M. Beller are authors of a text, *Sport Ethics: Applications for Fair Play*, that, because it is endorsed by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, gets used in a lot of college classrooms.[195] Moreover, work by Stoll and associates often gets cited on behalf of the proposition that athletes reason at a lower moral level than nonathletes. A great deal of this work remains unpublished. Some of it relies on the DIT to measure moral development and some on the Hahm-Beller Values Choice Inventory (HBVCI), devised by Chung Hae Hahm and Jennifer Beller in 1989 - 1992. It and the "intervention" programs run by the Center for Ethics purport to be based on "deontological" moral theory, which holds that "an inherent rightness apart from all consequences exists in making moral decisions."[196] The HBVCI "evaluates, from a deontological or ideal philosophy, how individuals use principles to reason."[197] It has been used on 40,000 athletes, Stoll and Beller contend,[198] and the findings are grim:

> *empirical evidence from the HBVCI supports previous sport psychologist's [sic] and sport sociologist's [sic] hypotheses that the longer athletes participate in sport, the less able they are to reason morally. Specifically, results show a steady decline in moral cognitive reasoning from ninth grade through university age populations... In essence, this evidence tells us that athletes have lost or turned off their abilities to think and reason for themselves.*[199]

But there is hope. "The philosophical intervention program [run by the Center] proposes that all sport and social dilemmas can be solved using a morally reasoned approach based on impartial, consistent, and reflective critical thinking"[200] – and the intervention program works astonishing success. Athletes "can meet or move beyond their peer group" in moral thinking in as little as eighteen weeks.[201]

The clumsy and fractured accounts of moral theory that accompany *Sport Ethics* probably do little harm to its intended readers, who can give most of their attention to the many case descriptions and hypotheticals that make up the book. The HBVCI figures in few research projects beyond those at the Idaho Center. It's relation to the Kohlberg stages is obscure; its equivalence to the DIT is unexplained; and its scoring is done by the Idaho Center. Most of the work based on it remains inaccessible. The alleged findings of Stoll and associates need not be taken seriously.

VII. APPENDIX B

A. KOHLBERG

The stage theory of moral development set out by Lawrence Kohlberg in the 1960s and 70s has had enormous influence in the social sciences and educational theory. Although the theory has now faded considerably as a live research project (until recently a residual neo-Kohlbergian program remained active at the University of Minnesota), it continues to hold sway over the textbook knowledge of thousands of teachers, education officials, psychologists, and others. It shows up in

the work of sports scholars and researchers.

According to Kohlberg, moral development progresses through six stages, two stages to a level. In the preconventional level, the agent acts from fear of punishment or in blind obedience (stage 1) or comes to view rule-following as instrumental to his purposes, recognizing the personal value of reciprocal exchanges and fair bargains (stage 2). In the conventional level, the agent increasingly conforms his behavior to other's expectations and thinks by means of the Golden Rule (stage 3), reaching a level where he identifies more broadly with the social system and its imperatives (stage 4). Finally, in the postconventional level, the agent's attachment to the social system evolves into a conception of the common good as a "social contract," which gives him a platform for measuring the worth of, and criticizing, existing law and custom (stage 5). Only a minority of adults achieve stage 5. Beyond this stage, available to the rare individual is a stage of "self-chosen universal principles" (stage 6), in which the agent judges by reference to universal principles that all perfectly rational and impartial agents would adopt.[202]

Kohlberg developed a set of dilemma-stories that were supposed to reveal the moral stage of those who responded to them. The most famous is called "Heinz and the Drug:"

> *In Europe a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost to make. He paid $200 for the radium and charged $2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow money, but he could only get together about $1,000... He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and began to think about breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.*

An interviewer would tell the Heinz story to a subject and ask her if she thought Heinz should steal the drug and why or why not. To establish a moral stage score, the interviewer elicited enough responses to identify the subject's justifications and then matched them to one of 500 Criterion Judgments in a scoring manual. The Criterion Judgments were developed by Kohlberg and his associates to locate the content of a subject's response within in a particular point of view or perspective.

This feature of the Criterion Judgments was important because in the early formulations of his theory Kohlberg tended to identify particular content with a particular developmental stage. A subject who thought Heinz should not steal the drug because he might be punished for doing so was automatically assigned to stage one. However, because the moral stages were supposed to reflect *structural* developments in an individual's moral life, tying scoring so closely to specific content undermined the coherence of developmental theory. Individuals at different developmental stages might offer the same responses to a dilemma. Thus, responses needed to be differentiated by locating them within an overall perspective used by the respondent. Did the respondent's concern that Heinz might be punished for stealing reflect her inability to take a perspective larger than reward-and-punishment or was it connected to other reasons that showed she judged from a broader social perspective? The Criterion Judgments were meant to capture both the variety of answers subjects might give and their connection to a particular perspective.[203]

By the mid-1970s the Kohlberg theory was widely embraced in the academy but also beginning to draw criticism. One objection to the theory was

summed up in Haan's comment, noted above: Kohlberg was not measuring moral maturity but "learned sophistication." The fact that the highest scorers – the most "morally mature" – among Kohlberg's subjects turned out to be philosophy graduate students[204] should have given the game away to any observer: Haan was right. A person's ability morally to size up a particular situation and react appropriately to it is different than her ability to articulate why she is reacting as she does. Relying on subjects' verbal answers to posed dilemmas pushed results in favor of the facile, not the mature. In particular, the kind of facility that would rate an individual as a stage 5 or stage 6 thinker is the kind undergraduate and graduate students pick up in political science and moral philosophy courses.[205]

Even as an account of "learned sophistication," the Kohlbergian stages are problematic. The highest stage requires moral thinkers to justify conduct by reference to completely general and abstract principles – but because of their abstractness and generality, these principles don't do any real justificatory work in real-life situations. For example, suppose you think you ought to act in a particular situation *as a fully rational individual would act* (the principled perspective typifying stage 6). Your supposition gives you zero guidance. To identify an actual course of action you ought to follow, you have to supplement your "rational individual" principle by a morally concrete depiction of your situation; but once the concrete depiction is rendered rich enough, it (and not the principle) seems to do the heavy lifting in any moral justification you offer.

Kohlberg's guiding ambition was to marry two ideas, one from psychology and one from philosophy, to build a theory of moral development.[206] The idea from psychology is *differentiation* (an idea we've already encountered in discussing Shields and Bredemeier): individuals performing at a low cognitive level rely on simple ideas and associations and as they develop cognitively, they become able to make distinctions among a richer repertoire of ideas and to put these ideas to work in arguments of greater subtlety and power. The idea from philosophy is *universalizability*: for a claim about what an individual ought to do in a particular circumstance to count as moral it must be universalizable, that is, binding on every similarly-situated individual.[207] Universalizability constrains the form of moral discourse, not its content. Kohlberg thought that his higher moral stages were more adequate in a double sense. First, they are more adequate psychologically. They reflect increasing differentiation. Second, they are more adequate morally. They better honor the demands of universalizability.[208] However, while differentiation is something that can occur in degrees, universalizability is not. A proposition is either universalizable or it isn't. Thus, Kohlberg's higher stages are not more morally adequate when measured by the *purely formal* criterion of universalizability.

Initially, Kohlberg conceived of the stages as representing, roughly, egoism (I do what's good for me), social chauvinism (I do what's good for my society), and principle (I do what rational agents would agree to do). Certainly, many who understand Kohlberg only from textbook accounts still treat his stages this way. Properly understood, however, judgments at any of these stages can be universalized. The astute egoist, for example, can subscribe to the principle, "Let each person act in his own self-interest," and the astute chauvinist can subscribe to the principle, "Let each person act in the interest of his own society." If the egoist's principle and the chauvinist's principle are deficient in some way, the deficiency cannot lie in lack of universality.[209] Thus, Kohlberg has no basis for describing his higher stages as morally more adequate unless he substitutes an ideological for a structural account of them. The Kohlbergian thus faces a dilemma. Taking the ideological road turns what is supposed to be an empirical theory into a moral theory (Haan chided Kohlberg for not owning up to this corollary; she thought his theory as ideological as her own); while staying off the ideological road leaves the theory unable to explain why the stages are stages in moral development.

B. NEO-KOHLBERGIANISM

After Kohlberg's death in 1987, the center of gravity of his stage development research shifted to the University of Minnesota, where over the years James Rest utilized his Defining Issues Test (DIT) to assess the moral stages of thousands of students. Rest devised the DIT as an alternative to the Kohlberg moral interview, which is labor- and time-intensive. The DIT is a short pen-and-pencil test that collects subjects' responses to posed dilemmas. It makes possible the mass testing of subjects at low cost. To assure comparability of results, the DIT has used the same set of dilemmas and questions for thirty years.[210] However, during this time, the theory behind the test has altered dramatically. In its canonical statement, the neo-Kohlbergian approach posits three cognitive schema (i.e., mental patterns new information is fitted into) – the preconventional, the conventional (or "maintaining norms"), and the postconventional. The DIT measures only the latter two, since it is not administered to children under age twelve.[211] Moreover, these two measured schema have a highly specialized but limited role in a person's moral economy: they underlie her "solutions for creating a society wide system of cooperation." In other words, they shape a person's response to a question of *macromorality*: "how to organize cooperation among strangers and competitors in a state system."[212] Thus, schema level measurements are not informative about individual maturity with respect to *micromorality*, i. e., the common, everyday contexts of decision-making. The space between solutions to the "general cooperation" problem and solutions to everyday problems has to be filled by "intermediate concepts" which comprise norms of decency, care, responsibility, loyalty, and beneficence appropriate to a specific cultural, institutional, and legal order.[213] The DIT does not test for "levels" of intermediate concept application. Indeed, writes Rest and associates, "we do not even know yet whether or not intermediate concepts . . . follow a general developmental sequence." The concrete understanding ordinary people display about everyday circumstances is not captured by neo-Kohlbergian theory or practice. [214]

However, if all this is the case, then the DIT or any other instrument that purports to capture neo-Kohlbergian stages is largely irrelevant to inquiries about the moral understanding and moral development of athletes as they play their games, go to school, interact with their families, form friendships, and set goals for themselves. On its own terms, neo-Kohlbergian theory cannot reach to this level of life.

ENDNOTES

1 Charles W. Kennedy, *Sport and Sportsmanship* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1931), pp. 1, 8.

2 Margaret Gatz, Michael A. Messner, and Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, eds., *Paradoxes of Youth and Sport* (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2000), "Introduction," p. 5.

3 See Revised European Sports Charter at http://cm.coe.int/ta/rec/1992/92r13rev.htm (visited November 12, 2003).

4 See Vivian Reding's comments at www.eyes-2004.info/219.0.html (visited November 11, 2003).

5 See President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, www.fitness.gov/aboutpcpfs.aboutpcpfs.html (visited November 11, 2003).

6 Christopher L. Stevenson, "Socialization Effects of Participation in Sport: A Critical Review of the Research," *Research Quarterly*, 46 (1975), p. 297.

7 Bruce C. Ogilvie and Thomas A. Tutko, "Sport: If You Want to Build Character, Try Something Else," *Psychology Today*, 5 (October 1971), p. 61.

8 Andrew W. Miracle and C. Roger Rees, *Lessons of the Locker Room: The Myth of School Sports* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1994), pp. 92, 88.

9 David Light Shields and Brenda Light Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," in Robert N. Singer et al., eds, *Handbook of Sports Psychology*, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2001), p. 598. See also David Lyle Light Shields and Brenda Jo Light Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity* (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1995), pp. 2, 104, 107, 179, 187, 190; D. Stanley Eitzen, *Fair and Foul: Beyond the Myths and Paradoxes of Sport* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), p. 54; Barry D. McPherson and Barbara A. Brown, "The Structure, Processes, and Consequences of Sport for Children," in Frank L. Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport*, 3rd ed. (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1988), pp. 273, 274; Agnes Elling, Paul De Knop, and Annelies Knoppers, "The Social Integrative Meaning of Sport: A Critical and Comparative Analysis of Policy and Practice in the Netherlands," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 18 (2001), pp. 419, 422; Paul De Knop and Kristine De Martelaer, "Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation of Youth Sport in Flanders and the Netherlands," *Sport, Society & Education*, 6 (2001), p. 36; Margaret Gatz, Michael A. Messner, and Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, "Introduction," in Gatz et al., eds., *Paradoxes of Youth and Sport*, p. 5; Jay Coakley, "Using Sports to Control Deviance and Violence Among Youths: Let's Be Critical and Cautious," in Gatz et al., eds., *Paradoxes of Youth and Sport*, pp. 23-4; James Curtis, William McTeer, and Philip White, "Do High School Athletes Earn More Pay?" *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 20 (2003), p. 23; Jay Coakley, *Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2001), pp. 91-2, 93; Sharon K. Stoll and Jennifer M. Beller, "Do Sports Build Character?" in John R. Gerdy, ed., *Sports in School: The Future of an Institution* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000), pp. 20, 24; Maureen R. Weiss, "Psychological Effects of Intensive Sport Participation on Children and Youth: Self-Esteem and Motivation," in Bernard R. Cahill and Arthur J. Pearl, eds., *Intensive Participation in Children's Sports* (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1993), p. 39. For claims (asserted or reported) that sports participation is actually harmful to

character development, see Bob Bigelow, "Is Your Child Too Young for Youth Sports or Is Your Adult Too Old?" in Gerdy, ed., *Sports in School*, p. 7; Stoll and Beller, "Do Sports Build Character?" p. 25; Robert W. McCabe, "The Rise of American Sport and the Decline of American Culture," in Gerdy, ed., *Sports in School*, p. 140; Maria Kavussanu and Glyn C. Roberts, "Moral Functioning in Sport: An Achievement Goal Perspective", *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 23 (2001), p. 38; David Lyle Light Shields and Brenda Jo Light Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," *Peace & Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 2 (1996), p. 379; Mary E. Duquin, "Gender and Youth Sport: Reflections on Old and New Fictions," in Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport*, pp. 35-6; Nancy Theberge, "A Critique of Critiques: Radical and Feminist Writings on Sport," *Social Forces*, 60 (December 1981), p. 341.

10 Stevenson, "Socialization Effects," p. 292.

11 The National Federation of State High School Associations, which "believe[s] that interscholastic sports and fine arts promote citizenship and sportsmanship," provides in support a list of studies and surveys showing positive correlations between sports participation and variety of desirable outcomes (see www.nfhs.org/scripcontent/va_custom/va_cm/contentpagedisplay.cfm?content_id=71) (visited May 11, 2004). See also Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, pp. 181ff; J. A. Fox and S. A. Newman, "After-School Crime or After-School Programs: Tuning In to the Prime Time for Violent Crime and Implications for National Policy" (report to the U. S. Attorney General, 1997), cited in Martha E. Ewing, Lori A. Gano-Overway, Crystal F. Branta, and Vern D. Seefeldt, "The Role of Sports in Youth Development," in Gatz et al., eds., *Paradoxes of Youth and Sport*, p. 39; H. W. Marsh, "Extracurricular Activities: Beneficial Extensions of the Educational Curriculum or Subversion of Academic Goals?" *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84 (1992), pp. 553-562; N. Fejgin, "Participation in High School Competitive Sports: A Subversion of School Mission or Contribution to Academic Goals?" *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 11 (1994), pp. 211-230.

12 Stevenson, "Socialization Effects," p. 294.

13 See Miracle and Rees, *Lessons of the Locker Room*, p. 85; McPherson and Brown, "The Structure, Processes, and Consequences of Sport for Children," p. 273; Coakley, *Sport in Society*, p. 92; Curtis, McTeer, and White, "Do Athletes Earn More Pay?" p. 73; Herbert W. Marsh, "The Effects of Participation in Sport During the Last Two Years of High School," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 10 (1993), p. 21; Ralph B. McNeal, "Extracurricular Activities and High School Dropouts," *Sociology of Education*, 68 (1995), p. 75; Beckett A. Broh, "Linking Extracurricular Programming to Academic Achievement: Who Benefits and Why?" *Sociology of Education*, 75 (2002), p. 70; Andrew Guest and Barbara Schneider, "Adolescents' Extracurricular Participation in Context: The Mediating Effects of Schools, Communities, and Identity," *Sociology of Education*, 76 (2003), p. 103.

14 Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 54.

15 Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, p. 122.

16 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 592.

17 Brenda Jo Light Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning and Their Assertive, Aggressive, and Submissive Tendencies in Sport and Daily Life," *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 16 (1994), p. 12.

18 Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, p. 185.

19 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 592.

20 Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," pp. 376, 379.

21 Duquin, "Gender and Youth Sport," pp. 35-6.

22 Gatz, Messner, and Ball-Rokeach, "Introduction," p. 5. (describing views of "critical sports theorists").

23 John Gerdy, "Want Value for Education Dollars? Try Music!" in Gerdy, ed., *Sports in School*, p. 134.

24 Olgivie and Tutko, "Sport: If You Want to Build Character, Try Something Else," p. 61.

25 Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 50.

26 Elling, De Knop, and Knoppers, "The Social Integrative Meaning of Sport," p. 419; Coakley, *Sport in Society*, pp. 91-92.

27 A few pages before he attributes all the apparent influence of sport to "selection effects," Stanley Eitzen contends that sport participation "fosters the admirable traits of courage, determination, hard work, fairness, respect, sacrifice, selflessness, and loyalty." Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 43.

28 "[S]port . . . promotes rule-breaking, selfishness, greed, contempt for opponents, and violence on the field as well as deviant behavior off the field." Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 43.

29 See Mary E. Duquin and Kate Schroeder-Braun, "Power, Empathy, and Moral Conflict in Sport," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 2 (1996), p. 352.

30 See Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 2 (aggression is "a hostile, coercive act involving self-expression at the expense of others"); Brenda Jo Bredemeier, "Moral Reasoning and Perceived Legitimacy of Intentionally Injurious Sports Acts," Journal of Sport Psychology, 7 (1985), pp. 110, 111, 113-4 (intent to injure defines a continuum that begins with nonphysical intimidation); Dawn E. Stephens and Brenda Jo Light Bredemeier, "Moral Atmosphere and Judgments About Aggression in Girls' Soccer: Relationships Among Moral and Motivational Variables," *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 18 (1996), pp. 158-9, 166 (aggression is "the initiation of an attack with the intent to injure"); Brenda Jo Bredemeier and David Shields, "The Utility of Moral Stage Analysis in the Interpretation of Athletic Aggression," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 1 (1984), p. 141; Brenda Jo Bredemeier and David L. Shields, "Athletic Aggression: An Issue of Contextual Morality," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 3 (1986), p. 22 (aggression "refers to an overt act intended to psychologically or physically injure . . ."); Roger R. VanDyke, "Aggression in Sport: Its Implications for Character Building," *Quest*, 32 (1980), p. 202 (aggression is the "intent to inflict harm . . . on the opposition"); Michael D. Smith., "Significant Others' Influence on the Assaultive Behavior of Young Hockey Players," *International Review of Sport Sociology*, 3-4 (1974), pp. 46, 53-4 (aggression equated with violent assault, the latter including both legal and illegal bodychecking).

31 For a useful conceptual analyses of "aggression" and "violence" and a discussion of their moral valence, see Jim Parry, "Violence and Aggression in Contemporary Sport," in M. J. McNamee and S. J.

Parry, eds., *Ethics & Sport* (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 204-224.

32 On Kohlberg's account, there are six stages of moral development (assembled in three levels, preconventional, conventional, and postconventional). Stage 1 agents guide their behavior solely by reference to reward and punishment; stage 2 agents calculate according to self-interest; stage 3 agents factor into their calculations mutual expectations and role-requirements; stage 4 agents guide adhere to norms that help stabilize and maintain the social system; stage 5 agents think in terms of social contracts and contractually-derived rights; and stage 6 agents apply universal ethical principles. See Lawrence Kohlberg, *Essays in Moral Development*, 3 vol. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981) and F. Clark Powers, Ann Higgins, and Lawrence Kohlberg, *Lawrence Kohlberg's Approach to Moral Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).

33 See Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); Nell Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Norma Haan, Eliane Aerts, and Bruce A. B. Cooper, *Moral Grounds: The Search for Practical Morality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); James Rest, Daria Narvaez, Muriel J. Bebeau, and Stephen J. Thoma, *Postconventional Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlabaum Associates, 1999).

34 On this last point: the theories are supposed to measure moral maturity. A theory fails to do this if, for example, it says that a morally mature person must oppose capital punishment. Such a theory is no longer describing a process of maturation but dividing the world into people with "correct" and "incorrect" views on a morally contentious issue. Kohlberg fell into this error, contending that "postconventional thinkers" at stage 6 (the highest stage of moral development) would (consistent with their principled thinking) condemn capital punishment as immoral (Kohlberg, *Essays on Moral Development*, vol. I, p. 244). For an account of Kohlberg's confusions on this point, see Robert K. Fullinwider, "Moral Conventions and Moral Lessons," in Randall Curren, ed., *Philosophy of Education* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, forthcoming 2006). For a further account of how a theory of development can illicitly embody substantive views, see Russell Gough, "Moral Development Research in Sports and Its Quest for Objectivity," in M. J. McNamee and S. J. Parry, eds., *Ethics & Sport* (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 137-147. See also Bill Puka, "The DIT and the 'Dark Side' of Development," *Journal of Moral Education*, 31 (2002), pp. 339-352.

35 Shields and Bredemeier's numerous studies about the effects of sports participation on moral reasoning or moral maturity are cited constantly. A parallel body of work – also sometimes cited in sports studies – has emanated from the Center for Ethics founded by Sharon Stoll at the University of Idaho. See Stoll and Beller, "Do Sports Build Character?" pp. 18-30; and Angela Lumpkin, Sharon Kay Stoll, and Jennifer M. Beller, *Sports Ethics: Applications for Fair Play*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1999). These two streams of research – the Shields-Bredemeier stream and the Stoll et al. stream – are discussed further and in detail in Appendix A.

36 Kavassanu and Roberts, "Moral Functioning in Sport: An Achievement Goal Perspective," p. 37.

37 Kavassanu and Roberts, "Moral Functioning in Sport: An Achievement Goal Perspective," p. 37; Christopher Hickory and Lindsay Fitzclarence, "Educating Boys in Sport and Physical Education: Using Narrative Methods to Develop Pedagogies of Responsibility," *Sport, Education and Society*, 4 (March 1999), p. 55

38 Council of Europe – Recommendation No. R (95) 16, at http://cm.coe.int/ta/rec/1995/95r16.html (visited May 14, 2003); Kavassanu and Roberts, "Moral Functioning in Sport: An Achievement Goal Perspective," p. 37; Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p.380; Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, pp. 191-2; Stoll and Beller, "Do Sports Build Character?" p. 49; Jack W. Berryman, "The Rise of Highly Organized Sports for Preadolescent Boys," in Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport*, p. 12; Poinsett, "The Role of Sports in Youth Development."

39 Kavassanu and Roberts, "Moral Functioning in Sport: An Achievement Goal Perspective," p. 37; Poinsett, "The Role of Sports in Youth Development."

40 Council of Europe, R (95) 16; Duquin and Schroeder-Braun, "Power, Empathy, and Moral Conflict in Sport," p. 352; Eldon E. Snyder and Elmer Spreitzer, "Sociology of Sport: An Overview," in Donald W. Ball and John W. Loy, eds., *Sport and Social Order: Contributions to the Sociology of Sport* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), p. 13.

41 Council of Europe, R (95) 16; Duquin and Schroeder-Braun, "Power, Empathy, and Moral Conflict in Sport," p. 352

42 Poinsett, "The Role of Sports in Youth Development."

43 Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p. 379.

44 Poinsett, "The Role of Sports in Youth Development;" Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, pp. 191-92; Berryman, "The Rise of Highly Organized Sports for Preadolescent Boys," p. 12

45 Stoll and Beller, "Do Sports Build Character?" p. 49.

46 Stoll and Beller, "Do Sports Build Character?" p. 49.

47 Snyder and Spreitzer, "Sociology of Sport: An Overview," p. 13.

48 Snyder and Spreitzer, "Sociology of Sport: An Overview," p. 13; Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 42.

49 Snyder and Spreitzer, "Sociology of Sport: An Overview," p. 13.

50 Kavassanu and Roberts, "Moral Functioning in Sport: An Achievement Goal Perspective," p. 37; Snyder and Spreitzer, "Sociology of Sport: An Overview," p. 13.

51 Berryman, "The Rise of Highly Organized Sports for Preadolescent Boys," p. 12

52 Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p.378.

53 Duquin and Schroeder-Braun, "Power, Empathy, and Moral Conflict in Sport," p. 352; Stephen C. Miller, Brenda J. L. Bredemeier, and David L. L. Shields, "Sociomoral Education through Physical Education with At-Risk Children," *Quest*, 49 (1997), p. 114.

54 Council of Europe, R (95) 16.

55 Council of Europe, R (95) 16; McPherson and Brown, "The Structure, Processes, and Consequences of Sport for Children," p. 273.

56 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 586.

57 Duquin and Schroeder-Braun, "Power, Empathy, and Moral Conflict in Sport," p. 354

58 Miller, Bredemeier, and Shields, "Sociomoral Education Through Physical Education," p. 114.

59 Terry D. Orlick and Anne Pitman-Davidson, "Enhancing Cooperative Skills in Games and Life," in Smoll et al., eds, *Children in Sport*, p. 152.

60 Randy Bonnette, Ron E. McBride, and Homer Tolson, "The Differential Effect of Indirect Instruction in the Teaching of Sport Skills on Critical Thinking and Self-Esteem in Early Adolescent Boys Placed at Risk," *Sport, Education and Society*, 6 (2001), p. 192; Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p. 370.

61 Bonnette, McBride, and Tolson, "The Differential Effect of Indirect Instruction," p. 192; Vicki Ebbeck and Sandra L. Gibbons, "The Effect of a Team Building Program in the Self-Conceptions of Grade 6 and 7 Physical Education Students," *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 20 (1998), p. 306; Ewing et al., "The Role of Sports in Youth Development," p. 31.

62 A good summary description can be found in the American Legion code of sportsmanship. A player pledges: "I will keep the rules; keep faith with my teammates; keep my temper; keep myself fit; keep a stout heart in defeat; keep my pride under victory; keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body."

63 For a good discussion of sportsmanship, see Anthony Skillen, "Sport Is for Losers," in McNamee and Parry, eds., *Ethics and Sport*, pp. 169-181.

64 One answer to this question is: because sport in all its forms supports an unjust social system. For example, according to George Sage, *Power and Ideology in American Sport: A Critical Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1998), "sport socializes young athletes to accept authoritarian leadership and the norms of segmentation and rationalization in the playplace. . . [T]he discourse of building character through sports turns out to emphasize forming traits admired in the capitalist workplace" (p. 265). According to Rod Beamish, "Karl Mark's Enduring Legacy for the Sociology of Sport," in Joseph Maguire and Kevin Young, eds., *Theory, Sport & Society* [Oxford, JAI, 2002], p. 31, sport supports the power of dominant classes by indoctrinating youth with the beliefs and values that sustain that power. And according to Jeremy W. Howell, David L. Andrews, and Steven L. Jackson, "Cultural and Sports Studiers: An Interventionist Practice," in Maguire and Young, p. 161,

> Contextualizing youth soccer within the political economy of suburban American affluence uncovers soccer's role in sublimating the very real social class relations . . . through which a suburban landscape of the powerful (white middle class) is bounded and experienced . . . [P]articipating in youth soccer is commonly viewed simply as a lifestyle choice, thereby effectively

> obscuring the very real economic barriers that preclude many from involvement . . . The uncomfortable notion of socioeconomic classes is erased, and the suburban middle class allowed to bolster its sense of self-righteous achievement and privilege."

The problem with this approach to sports is that it doesn't, in the end, tell us anything about sports. From this perspective, everything the suburbanite does – from buying a house in a nice neighborhood, taking a vacation, enrolling his children in good public schools, watching the network news, and working at a well-paying job – bolsters his sense of achievement and obscures America's class divisions. All major social institutions are conservative in the sense that their primary norms do not subvert the status quo – at least so long as they are part of a reasonably well-functioning society. Thus, ringing these themes about sports institutions doesn't really illuminate them. The growing "Critical" literature on sports is not reviewed here (although it is referred to in the second motto at the head of this paper).

65 Bill Pennington lists this number without citation ("As Team Sports Conflict, Some Parents Rebel," *New York Times*, November 12, p. A1. Steven J. Danish offers the following figures: 20-35 million youth between ages 5-18 play in organized non-school sports ("Teaching Life Skills through Sport," in Gatz et al. eds., *Paradoxes of Youth and Sport*, p. 49). Alex Poinsett, reporting studies by Margaret Ewing and Vern D. Seefeldt, contends that 22 million kids play a sport under the aegis of a national sponsor (such as Little League Baseball and Pop Warner Football); 2.4 million play in club-based sports; 14.5 million take part in "recreational" sports under the auspices of city and county recreation programs or nonprofit institutions; 7.4 million play interscholastic sports. Because children often play more than one sport, there is considerable double-counting in these figures. The estimate used in the text – 40 million overall – seems a conservative figure.

66 Poinsett, "The Role of Sports in Youth Development." Michael Clark, "Who's Coaching the Coaches?" in Gerdy, ed., *Sports in School*, p. 55, gives a figure of 3.1 million coaches. The need for finding, training, and keeping coaches is ubiquitous. De Knop and De Martelaer ("Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluations of Sport in Flanders and the Netherlands," pp. 43, 45) report on the problems confronting sport in the Netherlands. Poinsett's estimate of untrained coaches may be out of date. See note 139 and accompanying text.

67 Daniel Gould and Linda Petlichkoff, "Participation Motivation and Attrition in Young Athletes," in Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport* (pp. 161-62), report that 42% of those who drop off a team do so because they have "other things to do," 28% because they are "not having fun," 24% because they "want to play another sport," 24% because they are "not as good as they wanted to be," 20% because they disliked coach, 16% because they felt "too much pressure," 16% because they were bored, 16% because they found their sport "too difficult"). These figures obviously involve children giving multiple reasons for their team-leaving. Michael W. Passer, "Determinants and Consequences of Children's Competitive Stress," in Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport*, offers a "very rough guess" that "competitive pressure, overemphasis on winning, [and] dislike of coach" cause about 25-35% of dropouts (p. 217).

68 Robert J. Rotella, Tom Hanson, and Richard H. Coop, "Burnout in Youth Sports," *Elementary School Journal*, 91 (1991), p. 423. The drop-out picture drawn in this paragraph isn't universally endorsed. Douglas E. Abrams, "The Challenge Facing Parents and Coaches in Youth Sports: Assuring Children Fun and Equal Opportunity," *Villanova Sports and Entertainment Law Journal*, 8 (2002), asserts that most kids quit sports because parents and coaches have "made them miserable" (p. 255), basing his assertion on an article by Eryn M. Doherty, "Winning Isn't Everything . . . It's the Only Thing: A Critique of Teenaged

Girls' Participation in Sports," *Marquette Sports Journal Law Journal*, 10 (Fall 1999), who reports that the "number one reason" children drop out of sports is because they are no longer having fun (pp. 130, 130n20). Doherty in turn is relying on a 1997 article in *Sports Illustrated for Kids* purportedly reporting results of a survey by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association. The figures and explanations offered by Gould & Petlichkoff, Passer, and Rotella, Hanson & Coop are much more trustworthy.

69 John H. Lewko and Susan L. Greendorfer, "Family Influence in Sport Socialization of Children and Adolescents," in Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport*, p. 288.

70 Information about Colorado Springs sports can be gleaned from www.springsgov.com/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=6 (visited December 5, 2003) and www.thesportscorp.org/directory/programs.htm (visited December 7, 2003). Colorado Springs is probably unusually strong in its sports offerings because it is the home of the United States Olympic Training Center and over 40 national and international sports association headquarters.

71 See Coakley, *Sport in Society*, p. 121; Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 69; De Knop and De Martelaer, "Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluations of Sport in Flanders and the Netherlands," p. 42.

72 Pennington, "As Team Sports Conflict," p. A1.

73 Coakley, *Sport in Society*, pp. 124-26; Michael W. Passer, "Psychological Issues in Determining Children's Age-Readiness for Competition," in Smoll et al., eds., *Children in Sport*, p. 71; Bigelow, "Is Your Child Too Young for Youth Sports?" p. 11.

74 Shane, "The Key to Enjoying Youth Sports," p. 20; Pennington, "As Team Sports Conflict," p. A1.

75 Pennington, "As Team Sports Conflict," p. A1.

76 See www.beachfc.com/ColumbusDay02.html > (visited December 9, 2003); www.dallascup.com/history/index_E.html (visited December 9, 2003).

77 See www.orionhunter.com (select U12, select schedule) (visited December 10, 2003).

78 Bill Osinski, "Swifter, Higher . . . and Costlier: Players, Parents Turn Increasingly to Sports Experts," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, May 18, 2003, p. 1JJ.

79 A *New York Times* story describes a high school student who was practicing three hours in the evening on her travel volleyball team after two hours of basketball practice in the afternoon (Pennington, "As Team Sports Conflict," p. A1).

80 Jacqueline L. Salmon, "Driven, Willingly, to Compete; Young Athletes on the Road Again and Again," *Washington Post*, December 8, 1996, p. A1.

81 Brown, "When the Fun Goes Out of Games," p. Z10. The National Alliance for Youth Sport trumpets this high drop-out rate (70% by age 13) in its web pages. See www.nays.org/IntMain.cfm?Page=56&Cat=9&texyarea=drop%20out (visited January 5, 2004).

82 Bigelow, "Is Your Child Too Young for Youth Sports?" p. 7.

83 See www.nays.org/nays_community_recommendations.pdf (visited January 5, 2004).

84 Gerdy, "Want Value for Education Dollars? Try Music," p. 134.

85 The essays by Abrams, "The Challenge Facing Parents and Coaches," and Doherty, "Winning Isn't Everything" constitute a "parade of horribles."

86 See www.mcleansoccer.org/aboutus/notnewsmemo/02news/0212mps.htm (visited December 10, 2003).

87 See www.mcleansoccer.org/travel/travman.htm (visited December 10, 2003).

88 Eitzen, *Fair and Foul*, p. 52.

89 Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, p. 2.

90 See http://dubuqueavalanche.home.mchsi.com (visited December 10, 2003).

91 See www.dubuquesoccer.org/AboutUs.cfm (visited December 10, 2003).

92 See www.dubuquesoccer.org/developmental.cfm (visited December 9, 2003).

93 See www.crsoccer.com (visited December 9, 2003).

94 See www.cvysa.org/CVYSA/CVYSABylaws.html (club manual) (visited December 10, 2003).

95 See www.avalon.net/~icasc (visited December 12, 2003).

96 See www.molinesoccerclub.com/mission.htm (visited December 12, 2003).

97 See www.fcamerica.com (visited December 10, 2003).

98 See www.qcstrikers.org (visited December 10, 2003).

99 See, e.g., Bob Duffy, "The Changing Face of Sportsmanship," *Boston Globe*, December 28, 2001, p. E1.

100 See, e.g., Pamela Ferdinand, "Hockey Dad Found Guilty in Fatal Fight; Mass. Man Faces 20 Years in Manslaughter," *Washington Post*, January 13, 2002, p. A7.

101 Osinski, "Swifter, Higher . . . and Costlier," p. 1JJ (mother's 10 year-old has been living away from home since she was five to train with professional swimming coaches).

102 It, too, offers extravagant but unsupported claims. See, e.g., Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p.379 (sport from little league to major league is plagued by a high level of

violence).

103 Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p. 370; Orlick and Pitman-Davidson, "Enhancing Cooperative Skills in Games and Life," p. 156.

104 Craig Clifford and Randolph M. Feezell, *Coaching for Character: Reclaiming the Principles of Sportsmanship* (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1997), p. 13. See also Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p. 375.

105 See a similar account by Robert L. Simon, *Fair Play: Sport, Values and Society* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 23-26.

106 Of course, this reciprocal "raising of the game" occurs between two more or less equally matched opponents. A contest between ill-matched teams doesn't make your team play its finest game ever, since it is either blowing out the other team or getting blown out. Thus, sports leagues work hard to match like with like – on the basis of age-level, physical prowess, experience, record of achievement, and similar factors.

107 See, for example, Abrams, "The Challenge Facing Parents and Coaches."

108 De Knop and De Martelaer, "Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluations of Sport in Flanders and the Netherlands," p. 44.

109 Coakley, *Sport in Society*, p. 112.

110 Sally Anderson, "Practicing Children: Consuming and Being Consumed By Sports," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 25 (August 2001), pp. 238-9.

111 Anderson, "Practicing Children," pp. 239-40.

112 Anderson, "Practicing Children," p. 244.

113 Anderson, "Practicing Children," p. 229.

114 A similar caution arising in a different context can be found in Merita Irby, Thaddeus Ferber, and Karen Pittman, *Youth Action: Youth Contributing to Communities, Communities Supporting Youth*, Community Youth Development Series, vol. 6 (Takoma Park, Maryland: The Forum for Youth Initiatives, International Youth Foundation, 2001), where the authors challenge the generally held notion that "youth are incapable of adopting adult roles" in community action and mobilization campaigns (p. 3).

115 De Knop and De Martelaer, "Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluations of Sport in Flanders and the Netherlands," p. 42.

116 See www.marching.com/events/index.html (visited December 1, 2003).

117 See www.lafayette.fayette.k12.ky.us/band/0304 (visited January 12, 2004).

118 See www.wtshminutemenband.com (visited January 12, 2004).

119 Passer, "Determinants and Consequences of Children's Competitive Stress," p. 214.

120 Ewing et al., "The Role of Sports in Youth Development," p. 41

121 For example, Michelle Nario-Redmond, Jill S. Norton, and Jonathan Lindsay, in "Catholic Diocese South Neighborhood Profile" (Cleveland: Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change, Case Western Reserve University, June 2001), report that only 12 percent of children between ages 6-12 and 24 percent between ages 13-17 participate in organized recreational activities in South Neighborhood, a poor area of Cleveland (p. 16). See also Jerry Zgoder, "Beyond the Games; The Business of High Schools Sports," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, November 23, 2003, p. A 18.

122 See, e.g., Kirk Johnson, "For New York, 25-Year Losing Streak," *New York Times*, January 13, 1999, p. A1.

123 Ewing et al., "The Role of Sports in Youth Development," p. 42 (citing work by Branta and Goodway, see below).

124 Crystal F. Branta and Jacqueline D. Goodway, "Facilitating Social Skills in Urban School Children Through Physical Education," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 2 (1996), pp. 309, 317.

125 A predecessor study, the National Longitudinal Survey of the High School Class of 1972 completed its surveys in 1986. A new Department of Education initiative, Education Longitudinal Study 2002, builds on and extends the data from the three previous series of interviews.

126 Donald Sabo, Merrill J. Melnick, and Beth E. Vanfossen, "High School Athletic Participation and Postsecondary Educational and Occupational Mobility: A Focus on Race and Gender," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 10 (1993), pp. 47-49.

127 Sandra L. Hanson and Rebecca S. Kraus, "Women in Male Domains: Sport and Science," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 16 (1999), p. 104.

128 Marsh, "The Effects of Participation in Sport During the Last Two Years of High School," pp. 30-1.

129 Broh, "Linking Extracurricular Programming to Academic Achievement," p. 76.

130 McNeal, "Extracurricular Activities and High School Dropouts," pp. 74, 75.

131 McNeal, "Extracurricular Activities and High School Dropouts," pp. 74, 76; Marsh, "The Effects of Participation in Sport During the Last Two Years of High School," p. 35.

132 Hanson and Kraus, "Women in Male Domains: Sport and Science," pp. 94-5.

133 Broh, "Linking Extracurricular Programming to Academic Achievement," pp. 78-9.

134 The sport sociologist Jay Coakley, in *Sport and Society*, asks the question, "Are organized youth

sports worth the effort?" and answers: yes, "when the adults controlling them put the children's interest ahead of the program's organizational needs to gain status through their association with child athletes" (p. 135); but he provides no firm basis for thinking that subordinating children's interests is a pervasive and widespread phenomenon or merely an occasional local aberration.

135 Jay Coakley writes in *Sport and Society*: "There is need for research on sport participation careers among young children and on how those careers are linked to overall social development" (p. 105).

136 See www.usahockey.com (click on "youth" and click on "zero tolerance") (visited January 20, 2004).

137 See www.nfhs.org/coaches_ed.htm and www.asep.com (visited January 20, 2004).

138 See www.positivecoach.org/subcontent.aspx?SecID=95 (visited (January 20, 2004).

139 See www.nays.org/IntMain.cfm?Page=1&Cat=3 (visited January 20, 2004).

140 See www.nays.org/nays_community_recommendations.pdf (visited January 20, 2004).

141 See www.usyouthsoccer.org/ (visited January 20, 2004).

142 See www.nays.org/IntMain.cfm?Page=13&Cat=2 (visited January 20, 2004).

143 See www.sportsmanship.org/ (visited January 20, 2004).

144 See www.aacap.org and www.momsteam.com/welcome.shtml (visited January 20, 2004).

145 Singer, *Handbook* (2001).

146 Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, p. 189.

147 David Lyle Light Shields, Brenda Jo Bredemeier, Douglas E. Gardner, and Alan Bostrom, "Leadership, Cohesion, and Team Norms Regarding Cheating and Aggression," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12 (1995), p. 325.

148 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression: An Issue of Contextual Morality," p. 15; Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, pp. 119-120 ("entry into sport requires a transformation of cognition and affect" to a style of "moral reasoning [that] is much more egocentric . . . than life moral reasoning").

149 Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," pp. 375, 380.

150 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 595; Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression: An Issue of Contextual Morality," p. 15; Stephens and Bredemeier, "Moral Atmosphere and Judgments About Aggression in Girls' Soccer," p. 166; Bredemeier, "Moral Reasoning and Perceived Legitimacy of Intentionally Injurious Sports Acts," p. 111.

151 Bredemeier and Shields, "The Utility of Moral Stage Analysis in the Interpretation of Athletic

Aggression," p. 141.

152 Stephens and Bredemeier, "Moral Atmosphere and Judgments About Aggression in Girls' Soccer," p. 163.

153 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 6.

154 Bredemeier and Shields, "The Utility of Moral Stage Analysis in the Interpretation of Athletic Aggression," p. 141.

155 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," p. 22.

156 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," pp. 23, 25.

157 In Brenda Jo Bredemeier and David L. Shields, "Game Reasoning and Interactional Morality," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 147 (June 1986), "intimidation" and "physical retribution" are called aggressive and equated with "hurting people" (p. 262), yet neither intimidation by a player nor physical retribution need be intended to injure (the assumed definition of 'aggression,' p. 263).

158 For a fuller description of the stages, see Anne Colby and Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Measurement of Moral Judgment*, vol. 1: *Theoretical Foundations and Research Validation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 18-19.

159 The original scoring method devised by Kohlberg and his associates was extremely labor-intensive, requiring extended interviews with subjects that were then scored according to an elaborate protocol (see Anne Colby and Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Measurement of Moral Judgment*, vol. 2: *Standard Issue Scoring Manual* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987]).

160 Bredemeier and Shields, "The Utility of Moral Stage Analysis in the Interpretation of Athletic Aggression," p. 142. This was the study in which the aggressiveness of subjects was measured in two ways: by coaches' assessment of their players and by tabulating player fouls per minute played. Given the definition of aggression used by Bredemeier and Shields, it is not surprising that they found no correlation between players foul-quotient and their level of moral reasoning (p. 146).

161 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 17.

162 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 589.

163 Bredemeier, "Moral Reasoning and Perceived Legitimacy of Intentionally Injurious Sports Acts," p. 111.

164 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 2

165 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 2; Bredemeier, "Moral Reasoning and Perceived Legitimacy of Intentionally Injurious Sports Acts," p. 111.

166 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 2.

167 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning, p. 4.

168 Haan, Aerts, Cooper, Moral Grounds, p. 95. The scoring manual referred to by Haan, and used by Bredemeier and Shields, has never been published.

169 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," p. 1.

170 Haan, Aerts, Cooper, Moral Grounds, p. 342.

171 Haan, Aerts, Cooper, Moral Grounds, pp. 24-5.

172 Haan, Aerts, Cooper, Moral Grounds, pp. 39, 40.

173 Haan, Aerts, Cooper, Moral Grounds, p. 342.

174 Haan, Aerts, Cooper, Moral Grounds, p. 341.

175 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," p. 18.

176 For another related analysis of Haan's methodology, see Gough, "Moral Development Research in Sports and the Quest for Objectivity," pp. 134-47.

176 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 586.

178 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," p. 23. Emphasis added and transitions between paragraphs elided.

179 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 586.

180 Bredemeier, "Moral Reasoning and Perceived Legitimacy of Intentionally Injurious Sports Acts," p. 111; Shields and Bredemeier, "Sport, Militarism, and Peace," p. 372.

181 Bredemeier, "Children's Moral Reasoning," pp. 1-2 (emphasis added.)

182 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 590.

183 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 593.

184 Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, pp. 120, 122.

185 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," pp. 21, 22.

186 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 593.

187 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 593. Emphasis added.

188 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 593; Shields and Bredemeier, *Character Development and Physical Activity*, p. 113; Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," p. 21.

189 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," pp. 17-18.

190 Bredemeier and Shields, "Athletic Aggression," p. 21.

191 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 589.

192 Bredemeier and Shields, "Game Reasoning and Interactional Morality," p. 272.

193 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 593.

194 Shields and Bredemeier, "Moral Development and Behavior in Sport," p. 593.

195 2nd Ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1999).

196 Jennifer M. Beller and Sharon Kay Stoll, *Moral Reasoning and Moral Development in Sport Review and HBVCI Manual* (Moscow, Idaho: Center for Ethics, University of Idaho, 1992), p. 69. Moral theorists often distinguish between deontological and consequentialist moral theories. Deontologists argue that the foundation of morality lies in duty or right; consequentialists argue that moral practices take their ultimate justification from the overall balance of human welfare they create. The dispute between deontologists and consequentialists interests philosophers but it has no bearing on actual moral practice, including the goods and bads of sports participation. The reason is this: each philosophical account purports to explain all of morality's main features. If some basic duty (e. g., treat all persons as ends in themselves, never as mere means) underlies all of morality, nevertheless this duty must provide room (and support) for the creation of conventional roles and practices, many of which will have as their point the production of good consequences. Likewise, if the basic grounding of morality lies, e. g., in its tendency to maximize human happiness, this grounding must be compatible with (and support the creation of) conventional roles and practices, some of which will impose strict duties and obligations on agents that limit their acting to accomplish good ends. A deontological theory of morality must recognize social roles like "parent" where the role-holder's duty is to promote the welfare of other agents, and a consequentialist moral theory must recognize social roles that impose duties (like the fiduciary duty of a lawyer holding money in trust for a minor) that restrain the discretion of the duty-holder to promote the welfare of others. The word 'deontological' has no significant meaning when used by Beller and Stoll.

197 Sharon K. Stoll and Jennifer M. Beller, "Does Sport Build Character?" in Gerdy, ed., *Sports in School*, p. 21.

198 Stoll and Beller, "Does Sport Build Character?" p. 22.

199 Beller and Stoll, *Moral Reasoning and Moral Development in Sport Review and HBVCI Manual*, p. 54.

200 Beller and Stoll, *Moral Reasoning and Moral Development in Sport Review and HBVCI Manual*, p. 69.

201 Lumpkin, Stoll, and Beller, *Sport Ethics; Applications for Fair Play*, p. 4.

202 Colby and Kohlberg, *The Measurement of Moral Judgment*, vol. 1, pp. 18-19.

203 Colby and Kohlberg, *The Measurement of Moral Judgment*, vol. 1, pp. 17, 35, 41-48. A brief description of the scoring procedure can be found in Jan Boom, Daniel Brugman, and Peter G. M. van der Heijden, "Hierarchical Structure of Moral Stages Assessed as a Sorting Task," *Child Development*, 72 (March-April, 2001), pp. 538-39.

204 Colby and Kohlberg, *The Measurement of Moral Judgment*, vol. 1, p. 33; James Rest, "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Moral Education," in Marvin Berkowitz and Fritz Oser, eds., *Moral Education: Theory and Application* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1985), p. 17.

205 That Kohlberg's moral stages really measure a certain kind of cognitive sophistication correlated with education is convincingly demonstrated in Theo L. Dawson, "A Stage is a Stage Is a Stage: A Direct Comparison of Two Scoring Systems," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 164 (2003), pp. 335-64; and Theo L. Dawson and Sonya Gabrielian, "Developing Conceptions of Authority and Contract Across the Lifespan: Two Perspectives," *Developmental Review*, 23 (2003), pp. 162-218.

206 See Harvey Siegel, "On Using Psychology to Justify Judgments of Moral Adequacy," in Sohan Modgil and Celia Modgil, eds., *Lawrence Kohlberg: Consensus and Controversy* (Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1986), pp. 65-78.

207 Colby and Kohlberg, *The Measurement of Moral Judgment*, vol. 1, p. 10.

208 Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education," in Brenda Munsey, ed., *Moral Development, Moral Education, and Kohlberg: Basic Issues in Philosophy, Religion, and Education* (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1980), pp. 17, 42-43.

209 Kohlberg failed to see this point because he conflated *universality* and *generality*. Generality, unlike universality, does come in degrees. To see the difference between universality and generality, consider these three principles: (i) "Each person needs to concern himself with the interests of his own self-interest only;" (ii) "Each person needs to concern himself with the interest of fellow citizens only;" (iii) "Each person needs to concern himself with the interests of all mankind." All three principles are fully universal (they are all governed by the universal quantifier, "for any person, that person needs...") but the scope of concern broadens from the first to the third - the last principle is more general than the second and the second more than the first. Now, whether our scope of concern ought to extend to fewer or greater number is itself *a moral question* that can't be decided by appeal to purely formal or logical considerations. For more on Kohlberg's conflation, see Fullenwider, "Moral Conventions and Moral Lessons," pp. 328-331.

210 The Center for the Study of Ethical Development, founded by Rest and directed by him until his death in 1999, released a new instrument five years ago, DIT 2, that uses fewer and different hypothetical dilemnas for subjects to respond to. DIT 2 putatively yields results matching those generated by DIT. The latter is still distributed by the Center, housed at the University of Minnesota.

211 Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma, *Postconventional Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach*, pp. 31-46.

212 Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma, *Postconventional Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach*, pp. 111, 15.

213 Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma, *Postconventional Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach*, p. 2.

214 Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma, *Postconventional Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach*, p. 13.

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